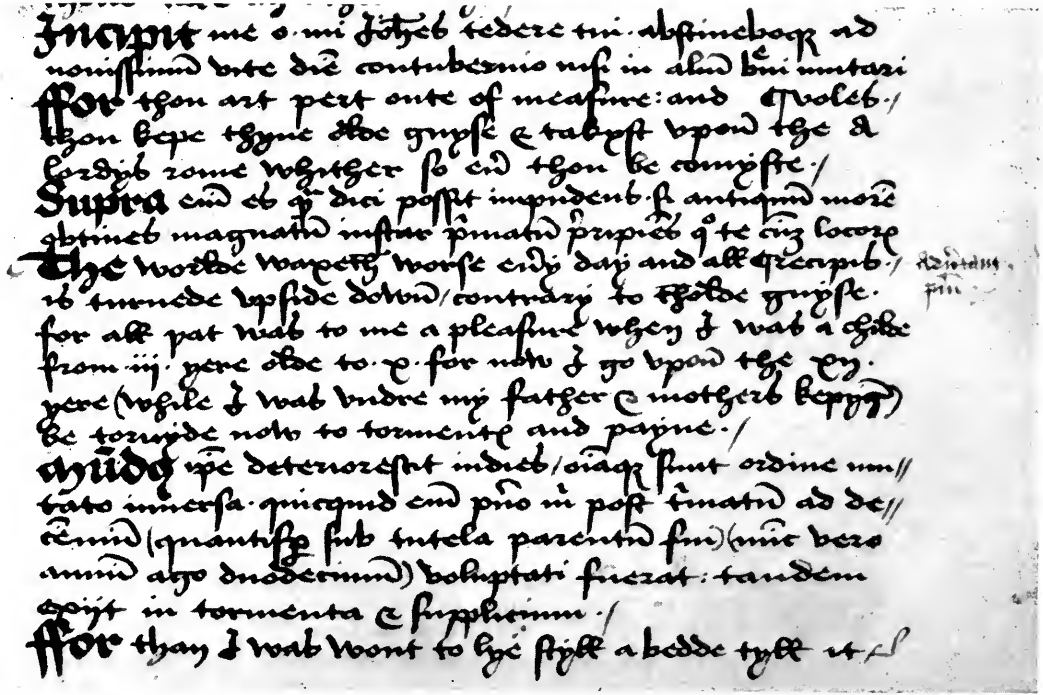
A Fifteenth Century School Book



Arundel MS. 249: lower part of folio 46r.

A Fifteenth Century School Book

FROM A MANUSCRIPT
IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM
(MS. ARUNDEL 249)

EDITED BY
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OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1956

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C.4
GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI CAPE TOWN IBADAN
Geoffrey Cumberlege, Publisher to the University

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

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INTRODUCTION

In the last years of the fifteenth century, a teacher of grammar at Magdalen School, Oxford, wrote down some four hundred English prose passages, each with its model Latin translation, to serve as a supply of exercises for his students. The passages dealt with the everyday affairs of everyday people: schoolboys and adults at study, work, and play in Oxford, in London, and in the country. The English of this schoolbook is here transcribed in full, together with a sample of the Latin.

The genre to which the Magdalen School compilation belongs is as old as foreign language teaching. If students are to speak an alien tongue freely and correctly, as though they were born to it, they must be subjected to long periods of practice in colloquial expression. Since such practice is necessarily tedious, teachers of every age have tried to provide relief by setting passages for translation which are occasional, informative, uplifting, or gay. Cardinal Wolsey, who was himself at one time a Magdalen School grammar master, urged teachers to invent exercises 'not silly or pointless, but with a clear or well-phrased meaning which a boy's mind might sympathize with'.[1] It is not easy to follow this instruction and at the same time to provide intensive practice in vocabulary, idiom, and sentence structure, as innumerable manuals designed to teach 'conversation' in foreign tongues sufficiently testify. But when it is obeyed, the teacher also may achieve another goal, quite unlooked-for: preservation for the

[1] R. S. Stanier, *Magdalen School* (Oxford, 1940), p. 48.

future of an intimate view of the speech, customs, and ideals of his times, the kind of view no arsenal of state papers can supply.

Here, for example, is a piece which schoolboys of the days of imperial Rome were required to translate from Latin into Greek:

'What did you do today?'

'I woke early and called my boy. I told him to open the window. He opened it promptly. I got up and sat on the frame of my bed and asked for my shoes and leggings, for it was cold. After my shoes I put on my underclothing. My garments were brought out to me. Water for my face was fetched in a little jug. After I had washed first my hands and then my face and mouth, I rubbed my teeth and gums, spat out the waste, and wiped my nose. All of this was spilled out. I dried my hands, my arms, and my face so that I might go forth neatly as befits a schoolboy. Then I found stylus and parchment and gave them to my boy. Fully equipped, I went out cheerfully, my pedagogue directly behind me, through the arcade which led to the school. Whenever I met acquaintances I greeted them and they returned the greeting. When I came to the staircase, I climbed it slowly and easily, as I should. I left my cloak in the anteroom and smoothed my hair. . . .'[1]

And in England, before the Norman Conquest, boys were taught to turn into Latin conversations like this one:

'What say you, ploughboy, how do you do your work?'

'Oh, dear sir, I must work very hard. I go out at dawn, drive the oxen to the field, and yoke them to the plow. However hard the winter is, I dare not idle at home for fear of my master, and when I have yoked the oxen and fastened the ploughshare and coulter to the plough I must plough daily a whole acre or more.'

'Do you have a helper?'

[1] *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana*, in *Corpus Glossarium Latinorum*, ed. G. Goetz (Leipzig, 1892), iii. 379–81.

'I have a boy who guides the oxen with a goad, and he also is hoarse with the cold and his shouting.'

'Do you do anything else during the day?'

'I have more to do than I have said, certainly. I must fill with hay the mangers of the oxen and give them water and carry their dung outside.'

'Oh, oh! your tasks are heavy ones.'

'Yes, sir, they are heavy, for I am not a free man.'[1]

These colloquies are not without stiffness, in part because I have had to translate them. But it is a rare thing to hear of the order of a Roman schoolboy's toilet or of the round of an Anglo-Saxon ploughboy's duties.

In early Tudor times, collections of such exercises were known as *vulgaria* because they consisted of matter 'vulgar' or colloquial in character. Since Latin was still being taught as a language to be spoken, every grammar master of the time must have made use of this kind of compilation, whether one of his own devising or a printed or manuscript copy of another's. At least four of them were in print by 1520: two which are attributed to John Anwykyll and to John Stanbridge, and two written by William Horman and Robert Whittinton. All these *vulgaria* except Horman's book (which was privately printed for the use of the boys at Eton) went through numerous editions, and Whittinton's was incorporated whole into a schoolbook published as late as 1633. Nevertheless, no new *vulgaria* appeared in print after 1520. Roger Ascham tells us, a generation later, that he had little faith in the latinity of the best of them;[2] in any case,

[1] *Aelfric's Colloquy*, ed. G. N. Garmonsway (London, 1939), pp. 20–21.

[2] *The Schoolmaster*, in *The Whole Works of Roger Ascham*, ed. J. A. Giles (1864), iii. 88–89.

by the middle of the century the desire to teach Latin as a medium of ordinary conversation had already begun to decline. The place of the *vulgaria* was taken, in part, by the colloquies of Erasmus and Vives, formal dialogues in what was considered impeccable Latin. The atmosphere of these colloquies is not that of the *vulgaria*. 'Familiar' subjects are still treated: Erasmus writes of the inconveniences of German inns and of the chicanery of the keepers of the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. But his conversations are listened to, not overheard. In England, the informal 'vulgar' note is not struck again in sixteenth-century Latin schoolbooks, and rarely, I think, thereafter, though it may sometimes be detected in French and Italian conversation manuals like those of Shakespeare's contemporaries Claudius Holyband, John Florio, and John Eliot.

From the point of view of the historian of society, the least interesting of the Tudor *vulgaria* is the earliest, *Vulgaria quedam abs Terentio in Anglicam linguam traducta*, which was printed in a volume of grammatical tracts by the first Magdalen School grammar master, John Anwykyll (1483). As its title advertises, the English passages in this compilation are translations from detached scraps of conversation culled from the plays of Terence, and only the occasional substitution of 'London' for a classical place-name suggests that the author was at all concerned with adapting Terence to the interests of his boys.

The *vulgaria* attributed to Stanbridge, Anwykyll's successor at Magdalen (first known edition, *c.* 1509 [?])[1] is more lively stuff.[2] It consists of short sentences like these:

[1] See H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475–1557*, p. 267.

[2] *The Vulgaria of John Stanbridge and the Vulgaria of Robert Whittinton*,

His nose is like a shoeing horn.
Sit away or I shall give thee a blow!
Thou strikest me that dare not strike again.
He is the veriest coward that ever pissed.
Would God we might go play!

The chatter of the Tudor schoolroom is clearly heard. But though the talk rings true, it lacks substance: no subject is discussed, no scene described, no view expressed.

William Horman's *vulgaria* (1519)[1] is a far more elaborate volume than its predecessors. The eminent schoolmasters Aldrich, master at Eton, and Lily, master at St. Paul's, introduced the book with epigrams and epistles praising the purity of the author's Latin and English expression. Horman's book differs from the earlier *vulgaria*, too, in the fact that it employs a method of arrangement. In those collections, the passages are heaped together quite without order, apparently as they came to mind. Horman arranged his exercises according to subject-matter: marriage and children; flowers, fruits, and vegetables; the arts and sciences; medicine and health; sports and pastimes; military affairs; and the like. The following sentences are chosen from a section concerned with the kitchen:[2]

Whereas a flint or another stone to smite fire cannot be got, it must be done with rubbing of two treen [i.e. wooden] pieces together.

I shall get me dry toadstools or fine linen cloth, half burnt, to make tinder of.

ed. B. White for The Early English Text Society, O.S., No. 187 (1932). Miss White's Introduction to this edition contains the most complete study available of the early Tudor *vulgaria*.

[1] Ed. M. R. James for the Roxburghe Club (1926).

[2] Chapter xvi.

Lay this flesh in the brine lest it be lost [i.e. spoiled].

Peel some cloves of garlic and stamp them.

Wash all the greasy dishes and vessel in the lead caldron or pan in hot water, and set them clean upon the scullery board.

Take a wisp of straw and ashes and scour this pot.

Set the earthen pot by himself for [i.e. to prevent] breaking.

These rags will serve for kitchen cloths.

In the section devoted to 'bedrooms and related matters' the sentences run together to form a well-knit paragraph combining exercise in vocabulary with moral instruction:

He that saw some women out of their array would have less courage [i.e. inclination] to be enamored upon them. They white their face, neck, and paps with ceruse [i.e. white lead], and their lips and ruds [i.e. cheeks] with purpurisse [a red or purple dye]. They fill up their freckles and stretch abroad their skin with tetanother [a cosmetic for removing wrinkles], and pluck out their hairs with pinching irons and styllathre [depilatory (?)]. They change the natural colour of their hair with crafty colour and sunning. Honest women that use none of these be more goodly and commended in their natural beauty with sober dealing and good manners.[1]

The appearance in the next year of yet another *vulgaria*, this one by Robert Whittinton,[2] set off a violent grammarians' war. Lily and Aldrich espoused Horman's cause; the poet John Skelton took sides with Whittinton. Whatever personal jealousies and antipathies may have been involved, there was a real educational issue at stake. Horman, like Colet, Erasmus, Wolsey, and, as we shall see, the author of the Magdalen School *vulgaria*, placed primary emphasis on the imitation of good examples as the best method of teaching Latin expression. Whittinton

[1] Chapter xviii.

[2] Ed. B. White, op. cit.

argued that the first necessity was a thorough grounding in grammatical rules or 'precepts', declaring that without it students acquired merely the appearance of facility in the tongue. In this he was supported by Skelton who made fun of teachers who would set a child to Plautus and Quintilian when he 'can scantly the tenses of his conjugations'.[1] The controversy continues today; no doubt it began with the first pair of grammarians.

Whittinton's position in this dispute dictated the method of his *vulgaria*. Each section is introduced by the statement of a grammatical rule. Then follows a group of 'vulgars' chosen to illustrate its application and often a quotation from a classical authority. Despite this attention to grammar, Whittinton was clever enough to link many of his sentences together in terms of content, too, so as to constitute little essays and conversations. The longest of these is a pretentious dialogue between Master and Student concerning the duties and responsibilities of each. But often the interchanges are vivacious:

'Peace, the master is come into the school.'

'He is as welcome to many of us as water into the ship.'

'I shall play him a cast of legerdemain and yet he shall not espy it, as quickeyed as he is. Whiles he declareth the lecture of Tully I will convey myself out of the doors by sleight.'

Sometimes Whittinton's humour strikes a sour note. All the *vulgaria* have much to say about beating—it seems to have been one of the major topics of conversation among Tudor schoolboys. Whittinton is delighted by the subject:

I played my master a merry prank (or, play) yesterday, and therefore he hath taught me to sing a new song today. He hath made me

[1] 'Speak, Parrot!' ll. 181–7.

to run a race (or, a course) that my buttocks doth sweat a bloody sweat. The more instantly that I prayed him to pardon me, the faster he laid upon. He hath taught me a lesson that I shall remember whiles I live.

And he lingers lovingly upon some of the less attractive sights of London:

Upon London Bridge I saw three or four men's heads stand upon poles. Upon Ludgate the forequarter of a man is set upon a pole. Upon the other side hangeth the haunch of a man with the leg. It is a strange sight to see the hair of the heads [fall] or [mould] away and the gristle of the nose consumed away, the fingers of their hands withered and clunged [i.e. shrivelled] unto the bare bones. It is a spectacle for ever to all young people to beware that they presume not too far upon their own heedness (or, self mind).

But Whittinton cannot be dismissed as merely a terror to schoolchildren. His comments on affairs of the day are temperate and intelligent. He discusses such matters as Linacre's translation of the writings of the Greek physician, Galen, the effect of the recently invented craft of printing on the scriveners' trade, and, with the enthusiasm of the humanist, the arrival of the new learning in England. Best of all is his character sketch of Thomas More, written not long after More had entered government service:

More is a man of an angel's wit and singular learning. He is a man of many excellent virtues; if I should say as it is, I know not his fellow. For where is the man in whom is so many goodly virtues of that gentleness, lowliness, and affability? And as time requireth, a man of marvelous mirth and pastimes, and sometimes of as sad [i.e. sober] gravity. As who say, a man for all seasons.

The value of these *vulgaria* as mirrors of men and manners is well recognized. The Horman, Stanbridge, and Whittinton collections have been made available to

scholars in modern editions, the first by M. R. James for the Roxburghe Club (1926), the latter two by Miss Beatrice White for The Early English Text Society (1932). Miss M. St. Clare Byrne has published a selection from Elizabethan French conversation manuals under the appropriate title *The Elizabethan Home*.[1] But the anonymous Magdalen School *vulgaria* which is the subject of this book has never been printed or quoted. Nor has it, to my knowledge, been described beyond its brief notice in the catalogue of Arundel manuscripts in the British Museum, though it is the earliest (except for Anwykyll's) and in some respects the most remarkable of all.[2] Before examining its contents, I must submit the evidence for the date and place of origin which I have assigned to it.

II

The *vulgaria* forms part of MS. 249 (fols. 9^{r}–61^{r}) of the Arundel collection in the British Museum, a volume which the cataloguer describes as of the fifteenth century. The book consists chiefly of pieces which would be of use to a teacher of Latin grammar.[3] Two of these are

[1] First published, 1929; revised editions in 1935 and 1949. See also Miss Byrne's edition of Holyband's *French Littelton* (Cambridge, 1953).

[2] It is mentioned in passing by E. Flügel, 'Ein brief Thomas More's'. *Anglia*, xiv (1892), p. 498.

[3] Following the *vulgaria* (fols. 62^{r}–72^{v}) is a list of words, phrases, and short sentences in English and Latin similar in character to those in Stanbridge's *vulgaria* (see above, pp. x–xi). Then follows a collection of model letters, evidently imaginary, in English and Latin (fols. 73^{r}–80^{v}). Next (fols. 81^{r}–84^{v}; 85^{v}–87^{r}) is a group of real letters in Latin only, some with the names of the correspondents given in full, others identified by initials only. A metrical vocabulary follows (fols. 88^{r}–90^{v}) which is in part identical with that printed with Stanbridge's *vulgaria* (op. cit., pp. 8–13). After this, a Latin–English dictionary arranged topically

recognizable as versions of works ascribed in contemporary printings to John Stanbridge, assistant master and master at the Magdalen School from 1485 to 1494. The volume also includes a collection of Latin epistles in which Oxford and Magdalen figure repeatedly. One of the letters is signed 'Your H., however insignificant, scholar of the Magdalen fellowship' ('Tuus quantulus-cumque h. contubernij magdalensis scolasticus'). Other letters mention or were written by Magdalen School teachers: Master Martin (usher, that is, assistant teacher, in 1498), Lawrence Hampton (usher, 1499–1502), Burway (usher, 1502–4).[1] There is correspondence to and from a Master B. Andrelinus, Poet Laureate, who is very likely Bernard André, Oxford teacher, Poet Laureate, and tutor to Henry VII's oldest son, Prince Arthur. The Prince himself is mentioned in these letters, and it is worth noting that he resided at Magdalen College in 1495–6. To another letter in the collection a precise date can easily be assigned: that of Thomas More to John Holt which reports the arrival of Catherine of Aragon for her wedding with Prince Arthur in October, 1501.[2] At the time, More was resident in London and Holt in Chichester, but both were Oxford men and Holt had been a Magdalen School usher in 1494. We are left with the impression that in 1501 or not long after the Arundel

(fols. 92r–93v). Fols. 94r–117v are taken up with a collection of Latin poems by the Italian humanist Stephen Surigono who taught at Oxford in the latter part of the fifteenth century. The volume ends with another grammatical treatise (118r–120v), a study of the compounds of *sum* and *fero*, which seems to be a draft of part of *Sum, es, fui*, published as Stanbridge's by Pynson in 1515 (?) and often reprinted.

[1] See the list of Masters and Ushers in Stanier, op. cit., p. 236.

[2] See *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More*, ed. E. F. Rogers (Princeton, 1947), pp. 3–4.

manuscript volume which includes the *vulgaria* was the property of a teacher who was then or had been associated with the Magdalen Grammar School.

This conclusion fits neatly with the evidence provided by allusions of the *vulgaria* itself. A reference in one of the exercises (no. 379) to the unprecedented institution of the Yeomen of the Guard makes it clear that we are concerned with the reign of Henry VII, whose innovation it was. The same passage reports the decree of an embargo on trade with Flanders: this must have been composed after its imposition in 1493 and before its lifting in 1496. Three passages (nos. 381–3) speak of an extraordinary deflation of prices: 'I think there is no man alive that can remember that ever he see wheat or peas other corn or any other victual that is brought to the market to be sold cheaper than we see now.' Such a statement might have been made in 1495, or conceivably in 1499, and at no other time during the reign of Henry VII. Another exercise (no. 386) tells of the exploit of an artisan who repaired the weathercock at the top of St. Paul's Cathedral: a contemporary chronicle records this feat under the year 1498. As to provenance, references to Oxford, Carfax, Headington, and the Castle make it clear that the boys for whom these exercises were compiled attended a grammar school attached to the university. That this was Magdalen Grammar School appears most probable.

At the close of the fifteenth century, the Magdalen School was one of the chief centres of humanistic studies in England. It had been founded as part of Magdalen College by Bishop Waynflete about the year 1480 for the express purpose of fostering the neglected discipline of grammar, by which was meant humane letters. (More, for instance, commenting on a disparaging criticism of

Erasmus as a mere grammarian, declares that his friend is proud of the title because it designates the true student of literature and therefore of all knowledge.)[1] Waynflete believed that grammar was the foundation of the entire academic structure:

> Because a weak foundation destroys the work, as experience teaches, and as we understand some of our 30 scholars are in the habit of passing to logic and sophistry immaturely before they are sufficiently instructed in grammar, the mother and foundation of all the sciences, we therefore order that none of them be admitted to sophistry [i.e. dialectical studies] and logic or any other science before he is able and sufficiently instructed for it in the judgment of the President and the Grammar master.[2]

Teachers and alumni of Magdalen School almost monopolized the production of textbooks for grammar school use: among those who wrote the earliest Latin grammars printed in England (and in English) were John Anwykyll, John Stanbridge, John Holt, William Lily, and Robert Whittinton. Thomas Wolsey, master at the School in 1498, remained grammarian enough even at the height of his political power to write *Rudimenta grammatices et docendi methodus* (1528) for the school which he founded at Ipswich. Colet, founder of St. Paul's School, and Grocyn, who taught More Greek, are said to have lectured at Magdalen College at one time or another. And it was probably Magdalen College which was the home of the greatest grammarian of them all, Desiderius Erasmus, during his visit to Oxford in 1498 and 1499.[3]

[1] In a letter to Martin Dorp. *The Correspondence*, pp. 32–33.

[2] Translated by A. F. Leach, *The Schools of Medieval England* (1915), p. 270.

[3] H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, ed. Powicke and Emden (Oxford, 1936), iii. 231.

The Magdalen grammarians were not merely propagandists of the study of Latin; they laboured with earnestness and ingenuity to make that study easy and pleasant. The very title of Holt's grammar, *Lac puerorum* (1498), illustrates their attitude. In a commendatory epigram (the earliest of his writings that has been preserved) More says that *Lac puerorum* is a well-oiled gate to learning that opens at the touch of an infant's finger.[1] The effort to make grammatical learning as simple and as attractive as possible is evident also in the textbooks of Anwykyll and Stanbridge. Colet asked Thomas Linacre to prepare a basic grammar for St. Paul's School; when it was done he rejected it on the ground that it was too difficult. Clearly, the rejection was in the spirit of the Magdalen School.

What we can learn about its author from the passages in the Arundel manuscript *vulgaria* identifies his attitude with that of these Magdalen grammarians. Humanistic studies rouse him to eloquence:

> Here we may drink of the pure well of Latin tongue and eloquence [than] which is nothing fairer. O gracious children that wetteth their lips therein! (No. 73.)

> If ye knew, child, what conceits were in Latin tongue, what feats, what knacks, truly your stomach would be couraged with a new desire or affection to learn. Trust ye me, all language well nigh is but rude beside Latin tongue. In this is property, in this is shift, in this all sweetness. (No. 74.)

And he firmly upholds Waynflete's rule requiring official approval for the transfer of scholars from the grammatical discipline to logic:

> My father sent yesterday his servant to my master for to labour for

[1] See *The Latin Epigrams of Thomas More*, ed. L. Bradner and C. A. Lynch (Chicago, 1953), pp. 117–19.

me if he could bring about by any means to have me from hence to sophistry, but my master said utterly that he would not suffer it. For he showed that there could be no greater hurt to scholars than to take them too timely from grammar, but then it was time when they had read all poets, and then they should be ready to all manner of study. (No. 77.)

The *vulgaria* author is not ready, to be sure, to discard the traditional grammar textbooks in favour of the new works of Italian humanists (no. 78). But this conservative hesitation is not to be construed as reaction. Indeed, in two significant respects the author goes beyond what can be traced to the Magdalen tradition to anticipate the programme laid down by Colet for his new school of St. Paul's. The elements having been acquired, the student, Colet urges, should 'busily learn and read good Latin authors of chosen poets and orators, and note wisely how they wrote and spake, and study always to follow them, desiring none other rules but their examples'. The boy is to learn grammar by the imitation of good authors, a few only, selected for excellence in expression and morality, for this process 'more availeth shortly to get the true eloquent speech than all the traditions, rules, and precepts of masters'. In this reliance upon exercise and imitation at the expense of intensive study of rules, and upon close application to a few 'chosen' authors rather than wide reading, Colet is said to show the influence of the essay which Erasmus sent him in 1511 under the title *De ratione studii*.[1] But as the following passages from the *vulgaria* show, these ideas were current in England at least a decade before Erasmus wrote his essay:

I have ever had this mind that there is nothing better nother more

[1] T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakspere's 'Small Latine & Lesse Greeke'* (Urbana, 1944), i. 95–96.

profitable to bring a man to cunning than to mark such things as is left of good authors, and I mean not all, but the best. And tho [i.e. those] to follow as nigh as a man's mind will give him. And he that doth this beside give himself to exercise, he cannot choose but he must be cunning. (No. 81.)

Methinketh thou lackest many things that is need for a good scholar to have: first a pennare [i.e. a pen case], and an inkhorn, and then books, and yet furthermore, the which is first and chief and passeth all precepts of masters and all other doctrine, as exercise of Latin tongue and diligence. (No. 91.)

It is at least possible, then, that Erasmus gathered these elements of his system of grammar teaching from England rather than the other way about.

Since the author of this *vulgaria* was a perceptive and sensitive teacher endowed with literary talent, a sense of humour, and the ability to sympathize with the minds of his boys, he succeeded in producing a convincing, often delightful picture of the life of the early Tudor period. His extraordinary variety of subject matter I have come to appreciate in the attempt to impose a topical arrangement upon the passages. The schoolboy and his concerns are focal, to be sure, but there are many kinds of schoolboy and their concerns include the large world about them. A mother looks at her son's buttocks to see if he has been beaten at school, a young man dances with a fair lady so slender 'that a man might have clipped her in both his hands', a boar hunt is ruined by ill-trained dogs, a boy boasts that his parents will send him impossibly expensive oranges and pomegranates, 'if there be any to be sold', a student runs so fearfully from dangerous-looking shadows at Carfax that he slips into the mire, there is a fireside conversation on a windy night concerning the perils of merchants at sea.

Although there is no 'typical schoolboy' in these pages, as there never has been in a classroom, it is possible to extract a kind of composite portrait which may have some representative value. Our scholar comes of a wealthy but not a noble family: his marriageable sisters have dowries of twenty pounds each, his bedroom at home is hung with painted cloths, his father has been elected mayor. In his childhood his mother pampered him, or so his teachers believe. He began his education—and underwent his first professional beating—at the local 'absey' or primary school. At the age of eleven he was sent off to Oxford where he now lives with other boys under the care of a 'creanser' or house tutor. His parents were wise to put him under such supervision; some of his schoolfellows live by themselves in rented rooms (despite university regulations), lose such money as they have at cards and dice, even turn to armed theft and murder. It may be five years before he sees his parents again for the roads are poor and the thieves are many. But he writes letters to them if a friend or the carrier happens to be going in the right direction. Sometimes they send him a present of fruit. If he is lucky, someone from home turns up on fair day and buys him such requisites as a penknife to cut his quills and keep them sharp, a pen case, writing tablets, and most important of all, books. He loses these things from time to time, or they are stolen.

The thought of food is never far from his mind. His basic diet is monotonous and meagre; he is often so hungry that he is tempted to take more than his portion or to steal from his neighbour. But he would rather eat poorly with his fellows than fare better sitting quiet and well-behaved with his elders. Sometimes he is lucky enough to dine at a rich farmer's house at harvest time, or

at a bridal feast, and then he stuffs himself with goose, swan, peacock, pork, and venison, with plenty of wine to wash it down. The pleasure of such a feast is enhanced by boasting about it afterwards. By modern standards for adolescents, surely, he drinks more than he should of wine (when he can get it) or small ale. After a noble dinner he and his fellows may trade blows with the townspeople, and he occasionally comes to school in the morning suffering from a tender stomach and a heavy head.

Above all, he hates waking before dawn on winter mornings and sitting down to hours of study before breakfast, but if he doesn't get up the creanser will beat him, and if he doesn't have his 'vulgars' written his grammar master will. Then there are errands to run for the creanser, so that the boy may get to school late, his work unfinished, with the inevitable consequence. The schoolmaster and his assistant are kindly enough, but they would not hurt the scholar by sparing him the rod. Despite the ever-present threat of beating, the boys are not as well disciplined and attentive as woodcuts of contemporary classrooms suggest. The Tudor schoolboy is the possessor of the great legacy of shifts and tricks which passes from one generation to the next, and though the master knows about them, there is little he can do. As for 'custos' (the monitor) it is often possible to bully him into silence.

Inevitably, our scholar sides with his fellows against the teachers, and he giggles gleefully when he learns that his master suffers from toothache. At the same time, he has caught something of his master's enthusiasm for the glories of Latin, and he has begun to think that hard study may stand him in good stead in later life. His master may be able to further his career; either for that reason or

because of a growing respect for him the boy strives for his good opinion.

School is not all study and evading study, of course. There are many holidays and vacations, and though the master thinks there are far too many he can sometimes be cajoled into giving the boys an additional bit of freedom on a warm autumn afternoon. Archery and running are the chief competitive sports. Hunting the hare, fishing, and stealing apples from nearby orchards serve both to delight and to fill the stomach. There is occasionally entertainment at Oxford Castle: a bear baiting or a hanging (the boys are forbidden to attend executions, but they do, anyhow). At Christmas time there may be a school play, in Latin or in English. And in the spring, the boy who wakes early enough can 'walk by the wood's side where busy birds recordeth their sweet lays, every one his own'.

The English prose of the *vulgaria* is a light, natural vernacular, colloquial but by no means artless. The author's diction and sentence rhythms suggest that often he thought of the English first and then worked out the Latin; it is at least likely that *inutiles herbas* and *homo ignauissimus* come out of 'weeds' and 'jackanapes' rather than vice versa. At the same time he was cognizant of the demands of the Latin, else he would not have written 'my uncle on my father's side' (Latin, *patruus*), 'Pompey being captain' (Latin, *pompeio duce*), or 'God . . . being conversant in earth' (Latin, *deus . . . terris conuersatus*). Perhaps because of this attention to the Latin, the English sentence structure is sometimes obscure or awkward; it is less easy to account for errors in agreement of number. Rhetorical devices are used freely, though not obtrusively. Some, like 'not only . . . but also', are in-

tended to suggest Latin equivalents; others are employed because they make pretty English: 'I was first fed ere I were cled'; 'though I have leisure to say, yet I have no pleasure'; 'if you be hanged thereto, let him care first for me that first shall repent'. The vocabulary is neither low nor aureate. In the notes, I have pointed to a number of usages which antedate the earliest recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary*; no doubt many more could be found. But these are not pedantic constructions. Words of Latin origin are used freely, so too are native proverbs and turns of phrase. It is fair to conclude, I think, that the English passages in this volume echo, as closely as we can hope, the language that literate folk would wish to speak in early Tudor times.

A striking feature of the *vulgaria* is the dramatic quality which pervades it. An obvious instance is the beautifully imagined soliloquy of an eleven-year-old suffering from the shock of immersion in grammar school life (no. 1). Typically, the speeches have the ring of the freshly-heard:

> I was purposed yesternight to speak to thee of a thing privily, but today, by my troth and if thou wilt believe me, I cannot tell what it was. Lo, what a wit I have! (No. 306.)

Sometimes, by a technique characteristic of the theatre, the speakers are made to reveal their own weaknesses, as it were unconsciously. One boy indignantly denies having infringed the rule against keeping pets:

> Would it not anger a man to be lied upon of this fashion? They say that I keep a daw in my chamber, but iwis they lie falsely upon me, for it is but a poor coney. (No. 170.)

Another is brought to regret his lack of generosity, but for the wrong reason;

> The last week, there was send me from my country, there where I

was born, 200 wardens [a pear-like fruit] and as many pears, and now through this sharp frost every third pear beginneth to wax rotten. If I had known it before, I would through the departing them amongst my companions have get me many friends. (No. 219).

It is a short step from speeches of this kind to an interchange of speeches among characters, and that step is taken by the author of the *vulgaria*. Among the exercises are passages of dialogue which might have been lifted from the script of a contemporary comedy (see nos. 331, 335). I do not suggest that they were. But these exchanges are not mere drawing-room 'conversations'; they involve action and acting: a boy rubbing his aching feet, a servant lugging a sack to the mill. We have no way of knowing whether or not they were acted out as rudimentary playlets in the classroom. If the author of the *vulgaria* was as clever a teacher as he seems, he would not have missed the opportunity.

At about the time that the Magdalen *vulgaria* was being compiled, Thomas More was studying grammar—that is, humane letters—at the University. His two-year residence is said to have begun in 1492, when he was fourteen years old, but the date, within a year or two, is uncertain.[1] There is no reliable evidence to show which college or hall he attended, nor is Magdalen among those which have put forward claims. But since Waynflete's statutes specifically provided free tuition in grammar for Oxford students of whatever college, More certainly had the opportunity of studying there. The number of More's friends and acquaintances who studied or taught at Magdalen during the last years of the fifteenth century is remarkable. The list includes Grocyn, Colet (probably),

[1] R. W. Chambers, *Thomas More* (1936), p. 64.

Holt, Wolsey, Whittinton, Claymond, Stokesley, Lily, and Lee. The last two, both scholarship boys at the School, had been his friends since his early youth, as More himself tells us, and it was before 1499 that the *adolescentulus* More contributed his poems to Holt's Latin grammar. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that young More may have been set exercises in translation taken from the very *vulgaria* we have before us, or from one like it.

The late R. W. Chambers, to whom students of the early Tudor period in particular owe an immense debt, selects as the distinguishing characteristics of More's English prose its dramatic quality, its humour, its colloquial ease, its clarity and firmness of structure.[1] These are rare qualities in writings of the age. Chambers argues that More's vernacular style was formed by fourteenth- and fifteenth-century devotional tracts which he may have read at the London Charterhouse during the years after he had left the University and was thinking of entering a religious order. But it seems at least as likely that his style was affected by what he learned at school.

A curious detail offers a link between Thomas More and the Magdalen *vulgaria*. Among the exercises is a bit of dramatic criticism which may be the earliest example of the genre in English:

> I remember not that ever I saw a play [*ludicrum*] that more delighted me than yesterday's. And albeit chief praise be to the doer [*auctor*] thereof, yet are none of the players to be disappointed of their praise. For every man played so his parts that (except him that played King Solomon) it is hard to say whom a man may praise before other. (No. 110.)

[1] 'The Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and his School', in The Early English Text Society edition of Harpsfield's *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas More* (1932).

The phrasing, while logical, is at first sight ambiguous; the author intends to say that it *is* possible to praise above others the actor who took the part of King Solomon (presumably the principal role), though the rest were good, too. More's earliest extant letter, written to the grammarian Holt in 1501, is found in the Latin epistolary collection copied into our Arundel manuscript. The The letter begins:

> I am sending you everything you asked for except for the parts which I added to the comedy of Solomon; I cannot send them to you because I do not have them in my possession.

Considering the rarity of 'comedies' at this time, I find it difficult to believe that these are two different comedies of Solomon. What More means by 'parts' is uncertain. The only comedy which has come down to us from the reign of Henry VII is Henry Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres*. Medwall was chaplain to John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal, in whose household the boy More served as page before going up to Oxford. Medwall's play is notable for the subplot in which two page boys, denominated A and B, walk on the stage and take parts, ostensibly extempore. We cannot tell whether More's reference to 'parts' in his letter to Holt concerns such a subplot or a development of main action of *King Solomon*. Nor can we guess whether More wrote the whole play or the added parts only, or whether the performance seen by the *vulgaria* critic included the additions or not. Perhaps *King Solomon* will turn up some day in a manuscript collection of interludes compiled by a schoolmaster of early Tudor times. It is not altogether vain to hope so, because we know that such a collection was contemplated. Our knowledge derives

from another letter in the epistolary group which includes More's to Holt; the correspondents, unfortunately, are not named. Although the letter was printed (somewhat inaccurately) as long ago as 1892,[1] historians of the drama appear to have ignored it. I translate the relevant passage:

> As to what you furthermore write to me, that I should find or acquire for you interludes or comedies in English or in the vulgar tongue, I have finally acquired them by the greatest exertion of effort. For up to now, they are rare and the owners of them are so inconstant that to exert or to strive with respect to such may justly be denominated or called almost a vain effort. For which reason, in order that I might satisfy your wishes, I have with assiduous exertion of effort and with flattering words finally softened the soul of an owner. I have acquired it on condition that as soon as you transcribe the original you will then return it to me so that I may restore it to the owner.

Erasmus tells us that Thomas More wrote many comedies in his youth. The letters I have quoted and the enthusiastic comment on the comedy of King Solomon in the *vulgaria* exercises suggest that interest in such plays was strong at Magdalen. It is tempting to conclude that More's comedies were written for performance by the schoolboys, and that the exceptionally delightful *King Solomon* ('chief praise be to the doer') was one of them.

It is with great pleasure that I express my thanks to friends and colleagues at Columbia who have helped and encouraged me in the preparation of this book, among them Professors Marjorie Hope Nicolson, James Lowry Clifford, Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, Dino Bigongiari, and Edward Semple LeComte. My wife, as always is essential to what I do.

[1] By E. Flügel, *Anglia*, xiv (1892), 498.

NOTE ON THE TEXT

In the following pages, all the English passages in the *vulgaria* are transcribed, and the Latin texts of three of the longest ones. The order of the passages in the manuscript appears for the most part haphazard, although successive pieces are sometimes linked by similarity of subject-matter or by emphasis on a particular grammatical construction. I have therefore rearranged them according to their subjects, following Horman's precedent. The categorical division makes no pretence to logic; it may serve, however, to bring together passages which illuminate each other and so to emphasize the value of the *vulgaria* as a mirror of Tudor England. The reader who wishes to reconstruct the sequence of the manuscript may do so by reading the numbered passages in the order which appears on pp. 105-6.

The spelling and capitalization of the text is that of the manuscript, with certain exceptions. Word division follows modern practice: 'never the less' and 'to day' are printed as one word; 'wylnot' as two. Abbreviations are silently expanded. These are not always clear: a flourish over the last letter of a word, for example, may signify either the omission of 'n', 'm' or 'u', or merely the exuberance of the scribe in tailing off the word. When the abbreviation symbol is obviously deliberate, however, I have regularly taken note of it, though at the cost of producing such uncouth spellings as 'cristenn menn'. The thorn is transcribed as 'th'. Current usage is followed for the letters 'i' and 'j', and 'u' and 'v'. Since it is some-

times difficult to tell whether the scribe intended a capital or a lower case letter, in ambiguous instances (and always with 'a' and 'i') I have capitalized only when modern usage requires it. The punctuation, including paragraphing, quotation marks, and a few apostrophes (used to make the sense clear) is my own. I have been guided, however by the pointing of the manuscript. Some of the longer pieces appear in the manuscript as a succession of short passages, each followed by its Latin translation. I have not preserved these breaks. Other deviations from the text of the original are recorded in the notes.

The notes are designed primarily to assist the reader to understand the text. Words and expressions which seem likely to offer difficulty are explained, often by reference to the Latin text of the *vulgaria*. When the Latin is quoted, it appears in italics. *O.E.D.* means the *Oxford English Dictionary*; when it is followed by a date, the date refers to the earliest usage cited by the Dictionary of the given word in the required sense. 'Tilley' stands for *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* by Morris P. Tilley (Ann Arbor, 1950); *O.D.E.P.* for *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, second edition, 1948.

Short glosses appear at the bottom of the page. The words 'see note' in such a gloss mean that additional information is to be found in Notes to the Text (pp. 94–100). An asterisk in the text notifies the reader of a comment which appears in the Notes only.

Donet principium deus omnipotens michi gratum
Et melius medium: finem super omne beatum.

PASSAGES FOR TRANSLATION INTO LATIN

Morning

1.* The worlde waxeth worse every day, and all is turnede upside down, contrary to th'olde guyse. for all that was to me a pleasure when I was a childe, from iij yere olde to x (for now I go upon the xij yere), while I was undre my father and mothers kepyng, be tornyde now to tormentes and payne. For than I was wont to lye styll abedde tyll it was forth dais,[1] delitynge myselfe in slepe and ease. The sone sent in his beamys at the wyndowes that gave me lyght instede of a Candle. O, what a sporte it was every mornynge when the son was upe to take my lusty pleasur betwixte the shetes, to beholde the rofe, the beamys, and the rafters of my chambre, and loke on the clothes* that the chambre was hangede with! Ther durste no mann but he were made[2] awake me oute of my slepe upon his owne hede[3] while me list to slepe. at my wyll I arose with intreatese, and whan th'appetite of rest went his way by his owne accorde, than I awoke and callede whom me list to lay my gere redy to me. My brekefaste was brought to my beddys side as ofte as me liste to call therfor, and so many

[1] forth dais: late in the day; *see note*.

[2] made: mad.

[3] hede: responsibility.

tymes I was first fedde or I were cledde. So I hade many pleasurs mo besides thes, wherof sum be forgoten, sum I do remembre well, but I have no leysure to reherce them nowe.

But nowe the worlde rennyth upon another whele. for nowe at fyve of the clocke by the monelyght I most go to my booke and lete slepe and slouthe alon. and yff oure maister hape to awake us, he bryngeth a rode stede of a candle. Now I leve pleasurs that I hade sumtyme. here is nought els preferryde but monyshynge[1] and strypys. brekfastes that were sumtyme brought at my biddynge is dryven oute of contrey and never shall cum agayne. I wolde tell more of my mysfortunes, but thoughe I have leysure to say, yet I have no pleasure, for the reherse of them makyth my mynde more hevy. I sech all the ways I can to lyve ons at myn ease, that I myght rise and go to bede when me liste oute of the fere of betynge.

2. I hade an hevy hede in the mornynge when I sholde aryse and a slepy, and if I myght for my maister I wolde have leyn an houre more, but he was very hasty upon me, for he never seaside of cryenge and callynge tyll he made me arise, but I remembre when I was wakyde that I hade be troublede with marveliouse visions in my slepe and when I was wakynge I hade forgete alltogethere.

3. The wynde blew so in at my chambre wyndowe tonyght that for colde I coulde not slepe.

4. When I lake slepe in the nyght, I am all the day after gapynge and strechynge for luskyshnesse.[2]

[1] monyshynge: admonishing.
[2] luskyshnesse: sluggishness (*pre torpore*).

5. It is x of the cloke every day or I ryse, and yet I washe my handes and goth to church and I am as redy to dyne as thou.

6. It is pite to cheryshe such scolars as slepyth styll all the mornynges, takyng no thought how moch tyme thei losse.

7. In the mornynge erely as I wakede oute of my slepe I herde a myschevous clape[1] and for fere I lepe oute off my bede as nakyde as ever I was borne.

8. It is very grevous unto me thies colde mornynges to aryse, for I quakyde today for great colde in every part of my body, wherfore if I myght have myn owne wyll I wolde not cum oute of my bede befor the sone wer upe, but thies werkydays I must aryse in the dawnyng of the day whether I wyll or no.

9. It is a worlde[2] to se the delectacioun and pleasur that a mann shall have which riseth erly in thies summer mornynges, for the very dew shal be so confortable to hym that it shal cause hym inwardely to rejose. beside that, to here the birdes synge on every side, the larke, the jais, and the sparowe, with many other, a mann wolde thynke he hade an hevenly lyff. Who wolde than lye thus loterynge in his bedde, brother, as thou dost, and gyve hymself only to slepe, be the which thou shalt hurt greatly thyself and also short the tyme of thy lyff? It shall cause the further-

[1] myschevous clape: terrifying noise.
[2] worlde: marvel, *see note.*

more to be dull and voide of connynge,[1] withoute which lyff and deth be both onn.[2]

The Seasons

10. Nowe, in the begynnynge of ver,[3] when all thynges begyne to sprynge, I trust I shal be better at Ease in my body than I am. for I have ben dysheasede a grete while in my stomake and in my hede, and phisicions say that the cause of it comyth of etynge of salt fyshe and of colde, and therfore they have forbydde me all maner of salt fyshe tyll I may amende agayne.

11. Nowe herbys begyn to aryse and trees to burgyn. now fayre wether comyth in. now byrdes synge merely.

12. These colde mornynges byteth the tendre herbys sharpely, but the son cummynge anone with his bryght beamys confortith[4] them agayne.

13. Mesemeth this Clowdy wether and this troubles aiers do not agree to this season of the yere. for it is the property of the moneth of Aprile to be wyndye and wete and, contrary wyse, maye to be hoote, clere, and fayre. that for because it happenyde nowe contrarye, I trow the monethes have chaungede their Courses.

[1] connynge: learning; *see note.*
[2] onn: one; *see note.*
[3] ver: the spring.
[4] confortith: invigorates, refreshes.

14. The feldys be refreshede wonderfully with thies showrys and the corne areysith hymselff hyer and the hegges cast oute mor larger branches. moreover, the woodes ar coverde with a thykker leff. O, what a pleasur it is nowe to ryse betyme and walke over the hylles while thei be yete sumwhat moiste with the mornynge dwe, or ellys walke by the woodes syde wher besy byrdes recordith[1] their swete lays, every on hys owne.

15. The feldys that in vere were so grenn and so freshe with diverse flourys thorughe the showers of aprell* nowe lye wetherde and chappyde by the vehement hete of the sone.

16. It is a great pleasure to be in the contrey this hervest season in a goode husbondemanys howse, for a man may fare well ther. for he shall lacke no Caponys, Chekyns, nother pygenys[2] and suche thynges as be brought upe in a manys howse, and beside this, if he lyste to walke, it is a great pleasure to se the Repers howe they stryffe who shall go befor othere.

17. Wher the great Rayne is, and the contrey sumwhat foule of hymselfe, it is necessary afore wynter to amende the ways and scope the gropys[3] by the which menn goo to the goode townes* to doo their Erandys.

[1] recordith: rehearse (*meditantur*).
[2] pygenys: pigeons.
[3] gropys: ditches.

18. I fere me lest the pleasure of somer be overpast and the faire dais goo. for methynke the colde wynter semyth to cum in, with his company, Rayn and Wynde. but this I coulde away withall and take it well at worth[1] so that yf the storme of pestilence were seasede thrugh godys mercy, which that it may be sonner brought aboute I thynke we moste praye (or, I thynke best to praye).

19. Upon a faire, clere nyght, the skye garnyshede with sterrys oute off nombre shynnyth goodely, whych and ye take hede ye may see them twynkle as it were a candle or a tapre brennynge, and emonge them the moone with hire full light goith forth by litell and litell, glidynge softly. be not thies pleasant thynges?

20. The moste part of this wynter my handes wer so swellynge with colde that I coulde nother holde my penn for to wrytt nother my knyff for to Cutt my mete at the table, and my fete also thei wer arayde with kybblayns[2] that it grevyde me to go enywhere.

21. I wondre not a litle how they that dwell by the see syde lyveth when ther comyth eny excellent[3] colde, and namely[4] in such costes wher ther be no woodys, but as I here say they make as great a fire of torves as we do of woode.

[1] at worth: at its true value.
[2] kybblayns: chilblains; *see note.*
[3] excellent: excelling.
[4] namely: especially.

22. I sawe today a thynge that was not sen befor, that is to say, quyke[1] crabbys and full of spawne brought to towne, the which, in my mynde, is a disch for a kynge,* and of all fyshes in the see I love them.

23. I suppyde yesternyght with sum of my cuntreymenn wher we faryde well, for beside rostyde chekyns and other grosse disshes we were servede with swanys, pocockes, and venson, which is not accordynge for scholars to be servede with such delicate disshis, for it is selde sean that they which ffyll their belys overmych be disposede to their bookys.

24. I was yesterday at a bryde ale wher we faryde well hardely,[2] for after oure frumenty,* we were servede with gose, pige, caponn, pocoke, crane, swane, and suche other delicates that longeth to a goode feste.

25. Iff I myght do the eny pleasure therby, I wolde shew the of a great feste. yesterday att home we faryde passynge dentely, wher ther was not the lest in the house but he hade plenty of venson and wyne. ther was non this many a day that hade so great a gyfte. therby thou maist know that we have sum frendes in the worlde.

26. I have no delyte in beffe and motyn and such daily

[1] quyke: live. [2] hardely: robustly (*laute*).

metes. I wolde onys have a partrige set before us, or sum other such, and in especiall litell small birdes that I love passyngly well.

27. There was brought today to my maister vi dosyn off denty dysshis that were not lokede for, what in swanys, what in pocokkes and cranys, all other small disshis sett asyde, and yesterday as many.

28. Thou shalt be content with browne brede ande smale all[1] yf thou dyne with me.

29. We shall dyne today with wortes, garlyke, and onyons. other mete[2] we loke not fore.

30. Thou wyll not beleve how wery I am off fysshe, and how moch I desir that flesch wer cum in ageyn. for I have ete non other but salt fysh this lent, and it hathe engendyrde so moch flewme within me that it stoppith my pypys that I can unneth speke nother brethe.

31. Wolde to gode I wer on of the dwellers by the see syde, for ther see fysh be plentuse and I love them better then I do this fresh water fysh, but now I must ete freshe water fyshe whether I wyll or noo.

32. Wolde gode I coulde kepe myselff as well from other mete or drynke or surfett as I can kepe me from pleasure

[1] all: ale. [2] mete: food.

of my body. but in very dede I have so gevyn myself to riott of mete and drynke that when I cum to ete ther is no measure, for wher I thynke to syppe I drynke upe all, and when I thynke to ete but a litell I ete upe all the measse.[1]

33. Mesemyth thou hast dronke enough, thomas, when nother thi tongue nother thy fete wyll serve the.

34. As I hauntede ale howses and wyn taverns, I have spende all the money that I hade in my purse.

35. I toke a surffytt yesternyght with late drynkyng of wyne for I was so overcum with ofte syppynge of the wyne that at the laste I coulde scant stande on my fete nor my tonge coulde do me no service, for when I spoke, I stamberde so greatly that when I hade utterde eny wordes I was greatly ashamede.

36. I was never more afraide of myselfe than I was yesterday, for in the mornynge whan I woke my hede akyde that methought every pece went from other, and my stomake was overchargede with the mete I ete the day before, and I was so thirsty that methought I coulde have dronke an hole tune[2] of myselfe, but after I was upe and hade walkyde aboute a litell I was ever better and better, and so I overcome my seknes every deale.

37. It is a great pite in my mynde to see scholars so corruppede[3] as nowadais be reason of over great liberte of the

[1] measse: serving. [2] tune: tun, cask. [3] corruppede: corrupted.

which sum ther be that sitt bousynge[1] and drynkynge so late in the nyght that in the mornynge they be so slogguysh[2] they cannot holde upe their hedys. And sum, contrary, use so immesurable slepe that they seme to take hede of non other thynge except mete and drynke, the which they muste nedys have to suffice nature. thies be suche as ye se swolne in the face and holow eyde, with pale color and bent, fadyde, rather seme to be apte to ber a tankerde then a booke in their hondys.

38. I am sory that herebefore I have not mesurede me in metes and drynkes, for I cheryshede my mouth so that nowe I am in that case that yf I provyde not a remedy the sonner I am maride.[3]

39. Ther be sum that be raveners and so gredy of their mettes that their bellys can never be fyllyde, and sum be of contrary condicyons, for how moch soever be servede them at the table their ey is never fyllyde.

40. It is convenyent for a scholar to refrayn fro surfetynge and dronkenes. fowll it is to shewe how sume plaith the ravenars with mete and overcummyth themselff with wyne, ale, and bere, and ther is non of us all but we ete oftyms or[4] we be anhungrede and drynke or we be athirst.

[1] bousynge: guzzling.
[2] slogguysh: sluggish.
[3] maride: marred, ruined (*actum est de me*).
[4] or: before.

41. The mete that I myselfe dide roste upon the gyrdeyrenn dide me more goode than all the other deale[1] that we were servede with at sopre.

42. I have* a luste to breke my faste betymes: stekys of motonn wyll serve well enoughe, broylede on the colys, sawsede with peper and vynegar with a cope of goode reede wyn therto.

43. I marvell thou art so desiorous to drynke in mornynges before brekefast. In goode faith, thou hast an evyll condicioun[2] which, as I thynke, wyll brynge the into seknes.

44. I ete damecyns[3] yesterday which made my stomake so rawe that I coulde ete no maner of fleshe.

45. An honest wyff of this towne desirede me to drynke with hire yesterday. I fere leste she take it for unkyndnesse that I wolde not.

46. I have poyntede aboute onn of the cloke to mete with a cumpany of goode felowes iij myle hense at etynge of a hen, on this condicioun, that if I kepe not the houre of poyntment I moste pay for the hen.

[1] deale: portion.
[2] condicioun: habit, nature (*consuetudo*).
[3] damecyns: damsons.

47. I hade apoyntede yesterday to dyne with an alder-mann. howbeyt, I was disapoyntede of my dyner in con-clusion because the houre was preventyde,[1] and afterwarde I was fayn to ete colloppys[2] and egges in the stede of deli-cates, takynge it for avantage whatsoever I founde.

48. Ther be many such raveners and so gredy of their mete that I kepe[3] not gladly to sytt at the table with them, for when ther is no mete lefte in their owne disshis they wyll snach theire felows mete oute of their hondes as they sitt aboute them.

49. I wyll never sytt agayn with the at on mease[4] while I lyff, and[5] I may know the from a shepe. for thou arte a lurcher* and a gloten. lurchers I call suche as devoure all the beste musselys.[6] Raveners ete all that comyth before them, or the most parte. thou playst sumtyme the onn, sumtyme the other, and I forsake thy company forever, nor we wyll never drynke together agayne.

50. I sytt oftyn tymes emongest them at melys tyme the which be of more dignite and worshipe then I, wher I may not speke except they appose[7] me, but I hade lever fare hardely and sytt emongest my companyons wher I may be mery and speke what I wyll.

51. William, sett the mete on the table and sytt downe. I love not so moche formalite.*

[1] preventyde: previously engaged (*preoccupata*).
[2] colloppys: bacon. [3] kepe: care. [4] mease: mess.
[5] and: if; *see note.* [6] musselys: morsels. [7] appose: question.

52.*—All the richest menys Childrenn everywher be loste[1] nowadais in ther youghe at home, and that with ther Fathers and mothers, and that is great pite, playn. but to tell youe how, trust me and ye wyll, it wyll make me wepe.

—Nay, ther youe passe youre boundes. 'But all for the most party,' ye sholde have saide. I knowe many on myselfe that be spede right well, both in nurture and in connyng. and if I sett them emonge the best, I trow I dide no mann wronge. But what the devyll eylith me to lete[2] youe of youre tale? ye may say I lake curtesy, and better fedde than taught. Say forth, I pray youe. youre wordes may hape to turne sum man to goode.

—The mothers must have them to play withall stede of puppetes,[3] as childrenn were borne to japes and tryfullys. thei bolde them both in worde and dede to do what thei liste, and with wantonnes and sufferance shamfully they renne on the hede.[4] Forthermore, yf thei hape to call the dame 'hoore' or the father 'cockolde' (as it lockyth[5] sumtyme), thei laffe theratt and take it for a sport, saynge it is kynde[6] for children to be wanton in ther youghe. Thei holde it but foly to put them to scole, trowynge it goode enoughe whatsoever thei have lurnede at hom. thei may not furthe them bett,* all the worlde to wyne, for and thei sholde se them wepe, thei wen thei were utterly loste. I wyll make youe an example by a cosyn of myne that [was

[1] loste: corrupted. [2] lete: hinder. [3] puppetes: dolls.
[4] on the hede: headlong; *see note.*
[5] lockyth: lucketh; *see note.*
[6] kynde: natural.

sent]* to his absey[1] hereby at the next dore. and if he come wepynge after his maister hath charede[2] away the flees from his skynne, anone his mother loketh onn his buttockys yf the stryppys be a-sen. And the stryppys appere, she wepyth and waileth and fareth as she were made. then she complayneth of the cruelte of techers, saynge she hade lever se hire childe wer fair buriede than so to be intretide. These wordes thei speke and suche other infinite, and other while for the childrenys sake ther begynneth afray betwixte the goode mann and his wyffe, for what he commaundeth, she forbyddeth. And thus in processe of tyme, when thei cum to age, thei waxe bolde to do all myschevousnes, settynge litell to do the greatest shame that can be. And at the laste, after ther merites, sum be hangede, sum be hedyde; on goth to nought on way, another another way; and whan thei cum to that ende, then thei curse the fathers and mothers and other that hade rule of them in ther youghe.

53. Well is my scole felows which have leve to go se ther fathers and mothers to sport them. as for me, I cannot so moch as a moment departe from my maisters side.

54. As it is saide, the next faire* shal be kepte here within this fortnyght, and then I wene my father and my mother wyl be here. and yf they cume, I put no doubte but that I shall lake nothynge that I have nede off. and yff they cum not, I purpose to go se them myselffe, for I spoke not with them this v yere.

[1] absey: ABCs, rudiments.

[2] charede: driven away.

55. When I Come home to my father and to my mother we wept for joye ych to other, and no marvell, for the beholdynge of the childe confortes the olde fathers and mothers as moche as the pleasant wordes of the fesician confortes the seke body.

56. It is acordynge that we knoulege that we ar moch bounde to oure fathers and mothers, what for many thynges, what for this cheffly, that thei have purveyde for us the best maister to be sett to as sone as it is possible for age, fyndyng[1] us also mete and drynke and clothe, so longe tyll we have gotenn the connynge that we have sought with moche laboure and com to the hyest degre of worshipe.

57. I love my father and my mother best of all the worlde. howebeit, thei be not all the kyndest* to me.

58. Except my father and mother, ther is no mann that dothe enythynge for me, nother kynsmann nother none other body. therfor I pray gode that thei may lyve longe, for if I sholde lyve and they sholde dye I sholde lyve a pore lyff.

59. The gyfte that I was rewardide with this day from my father made me as glade that no sekenes or sorow can make me hevy. for I have so great love to my father (as a goode childe ought to have) that when I receyve enythyng from hym, be it never so litell, it doth me more goode then mete or drynke.* whom because I cannot qwyte in dede, I wyll pray for hym whillys I lyve.

[1] fyndyng: providing.

60. My brother hath writtyn to me from london that my father and mother and all my frendes fare well, the which letters hath made me right mery, for why[1] the more I love them the more I rejose ther helth and welfar.

61. I have sent a letter to my father and my mother for such bookes as I have nede of, and I know for a suerty that as sone as thei be delyverde to them thei wyll ordeyn for me all thynges after my desire.

62. When my father stode for the maistershipe of the Towne that he dwellith in, very fewe in the tyme of th'electioun were agaynst hym, for all except vij or viij at the moste gave theyr voices to hym.

63. My father hade a grete losse this yere, what in his bestes and what in his corn, for C of his shepe dyde of the rott and hys eyrs[2] were so ranke[3] that it was thurst[4] down to the grownde.

64. My father sent my brother and me CC wardens.* while I was absent my brother hath chosyn the beste and lefte me the worst. but I am sure my father wyll sende us pomgarnettes other orynges yf ther be eny to be solde. then I shall serve hym lykewyse.

65. Commaunde[5] me to both my father and my mother, I pray the, and say that, if I fare well, I shall se them

[1] for why: because.
[2] eyrs: ears (of corn).
[3] ranke: gross, swollen.
[4] thurst: thrust.
[5] commaunde: commend.

shortly. I praye the remembre my erande and delyver my mother this token.

66. I pray youe when ye go to oure contrey[1] that ye commende me to my brother.

67. A great while after my brother diede, my mother was wonte to sytt wepynge every day. I trow that ther is nobody which wolde not be sory yf he hade sen hir wepynge.

68. When my Father was in this worlde, he lovede me as hertely as eny father myght do his childe. Notwithstondynge, to my mother I was as hatefull as enythynge, but never thorugh myn offence or deservynge. but it hapenyth many tymes, as menn say, whom the father loveth, the mother hateth.

69. The losse of my mother is not a litle unto me, namly the which hath but few frendys to helpe me at my nede. but yf it hade fortune me to have sen hire before she dyede I myght have bene mery, but I thanke gode, though I be a motherles Childe, I have a father alyve, and yf I wantyde my father I wote not how I shulde lyve.

70. I am not only sory for my brother but also ashamyde that he woll never leve his olde unthrifty condicions. ther

[1] contrey: district.

is nother goode exortacion, nother cownsell, nother thretynge that he settith by, but settes all at sixe and sevyn* as though he sett nother by custome, nother by lawe, nother by hymselff.

71. I am sende for home to the mariage of my brother, for it is shewde me that he hath lokede for me all this moneth agonn. but because he deferrede it to the tyme that I myght be present, he wolde have be weddide iij monethes afore. howbeit, I wolde not gladely be present at suche festys that be greatly ordeynde for.

72. I have thre susters mariable the which my father hath gevyn to everych xx £ to their mariage, and therfore they shall have the richer woers, for nowadais money maketh mariage* with sum menn rather then love or bewtye.

The Study of Latin

73. Here we may drynke of the pure well of latyne tongue and eloquence, which is nothynge fayrer. O gracious childrenn that wetith ther lyppys therin!

74. Iff ye knew, Childe, what conseittes[1] wer in latyn tonge, what fettes, what knakkes,* truly your stomake[2]

[1] conseittes: conceits (*facecias*). [2] stomake: spirit.

wolde be choraggyde[1] with a new desir or affeccyon to lurne. trust ye me, all langage well nygh is but rude beside latyne tonge. In this is property,[2] in this is shyfte,[3] in this all swetnes.

75. It is an hevy case that Childernn in their best age and metist to lurne grammer shall be take from yt and be sett to sophistre,* wher for lake of the on they shal be deceyvede of both.

76. Ther be many nowadays goth to sophistre the which can scant speke thre wordys in latyn. they wyll repent it greatly hereafter when they cum to parfyght age, for after my mynde sophistre is not to be comparede to gramere, but sum be of so unstable and waveryng mynde that they cannot perseve ther profytt.

77. My father sent yesterday his servunt to my maistre for to laboure for me yf he coulde brynge aboute be eny meanys to have me from hens to sophistre, but my maister saide utterly that he wolde not suffre it, for he shewde that ther coulde be no greater hurt to scolars than to take them to tymely from grammer, but than it was tyme when thei hade redde all poetes and then they shulde be redy to all maner of studye.

78. Ther is so great diversite of autors of gramer and of eloquence that I cannot tell to whom I may inclyne, for

[1] choraggyde: encouraged, inspired.
[2] property: wealth, fulness (*copia*). [3] shyfte: refinement (*elegancia*).

theis new auctors* doth rebuke the noble dedes of them that ben before them. therfor oure myndes be plukkyde by ther and thither.[1] but we be so variable and wandrynge of mynde that we covett the newer thynges and tho thei be worse.

79. It is a thynge not litell to be caryde for in what auctorys a childe is customyde in youghe, for then the myn of a yong mann is as waxe, apte to take all thynge. whatsumever is pryntede in hym he receyveth it, and that that is first receyvede it is harde to forgett it. Wherfor yf a mann or a childe cane[2] goode auctoris while he is yonge, they wyl not lightly from them, and yf he can evyll and barbarus, they wyll styke mor by them.

80. Wolde to gode that I hade spede the yeres in goode connyng that I have loste lewdely in evyll grammer!

81. I have ever hade this mynde, that ther is nothynge better nother more profitable to brynge a mann to connynge than to marke suche thynges as is lefte of goode auctours, and I mean not all, but the beste, and tho to folowe as nyghe as a manys mynde wyll gyve hym. and he that doth this beside gyve hymselfe to exercise, he cannot chose but he most be connyng.

82. The begynnynge of gramer doth well with the, for thou haste thy groundys well and ornately. goo to it styll;

[1] by ther and thither: hither and thither. [2] cane: learn.

thou shalte overcum it, for the begynnynge of every thynge is the hardiste, the which if a man can well he shall lightly overcum that folouth. and therfor methynke it was a noble sayng of Aristotle: Begynnynge is more than halfe the worke.*

83. I knowe that thou hast thy groundes of Elygansies* right well. therfor, go to it styll and thou shalt sone gete all that ever folows. ther is nothynge, methynkyth, thou lackith nowe for to cum unto the best but only often and diligent exercise the which noryshith eloquence mervelously moche.

84. They ar happy, mesemyth, that upon the begynnynge of ther abses have hapynede upon goode maisters. for if thei fro thensforth contynewe as thei have begune, lukkynge[1] alway upon goode maisters acordynge after the diversite of connynge to be lurnede, and therselfe lurnynge with as goode a diligence as thei be tought, withoute doubte, yf thei shall want no wytt, thei shall prove within few yeres excellently connynge.

85. Methynke a gramaryon dothe quyte hym well, go he never so well to his booke, yf he be well spede in ij or iij yer.

86. We have not loste a litell tyme the which have gone to grammer iij hole yere and yete we can scant the principuls.[2]

[1] lukkynge: happening.

[2] principuls: rudiments.

87. Iff I hade not usede my englysh tongue* so greatly, the which the maistre hath rebukede me ofte tymes, I shulde have ben fare more lighter (or, conyng) in grammer. wis men saye that nothyng may be more profitable to them that lurns grammer than to speke latyn.

88. He that is contynually occupyde in wrytynge letters* it is no doubte but at the laste he shal be very connynge.

89. The last feir my unkle on my fathers syde gave me a pennare[1] and an ynkehorne and my unkle of my mothers syde gave me a penn knyff. now, and I hade a payre of tabullys[2] I lakkyde nothynge.

90. It is no mastry for youe the which have bookes inowe and cunnynge men to tech youe to gete cunnynge, for methynke and I hade half the bookes that ye have I wolde son be a cunnyng felow.

91. Methinkith thou lackest many thynges that is nede for a goode scolar to have: first, a pennar and an ynke-horne, and then bookes, and yet furthermore, the which is first and cheff and passeth all preceptes[3] of maisters and all other doctrine, as exercise of latyn tongue and diligence.

92. Iff I may speke with thi frendes* ons, I wolde consell them to by the bookes to lurne with, for it is pite to se the spende thi tyme about nought.

[1] pennare: pen case. [2] tabullys: writing tablets.
[3] preceptes: grammatical rules.

93. Iff the bookys of olde auctours were not corrupt and sum of them fals,* I wolde not doubte that men now in this tyme sholde overpasse them or els be equall with them, for mennys wyttes be as goode now as they were then.

94. — Gode spede, praty[1] childe!

— and youe also.

— I know that ye have lurnede youre grammer, but wher, I pray youe?

— by my faith, sum at wynchester,* sum in other places.

— And I am an Oxforde man. woll youe we shall assay how we cann talke in latyn?

— yee, for gode, ryght fayne!

Sports, Games, and Holidays

95. Put off shortely that longe hevy gowne and have a lyghter, and lete us go to hedynton* grove and ther we shall have an hare stert. Why standist thou styll? Se how the wether lokyth up lustely agayne oure jorneye.

96. Bende youre bowe and showte[2] with me. lete us prove whether of us be the better archer. I can tell wher is a paire off buttes made off new turvys. Shall we goo thether?

97. I trow ther be never onn here that hath more delyte in

[1] praty: pretty = witty, clever (*scite*).

[2] showte: shoot.

fyshynge than I. for after I am gotyn onys oute of the dorys, all my diligence is to make me redy to the water side.

98. I and my brother dide spende all yesterday in fysshynge for because nother he nor I ete nothynge this day but fyssh and whitt mete,[1] but yete we labourede in vayne for we toke not onn fysshe.

99. It is a goode sporte when the snowe lyeth thyke onn the grounde to take byrdes wyth lyme.

100. Methynke it is a worlde to hunt the hare with gravandes[2] while the snowe coverith the grounde, for now she cannot lightly skape the dogges mowthe, and sone a man may trace hire to the forme[3] wher she is squatt,[4] wher in another wether a man may hunt all day and yete fynde not an heyr of hire.

*101.** All the yonge folkes of oure house went to the wode yesterday because they wolde hunt the hare, and as it happynde a woman mett them berynge betwen hire armys many childernn, and onn toke away the fairest childe that she hade.

102. This day, erly in the mornynge, about thre of the cloke, myn oste and his neghbers went to the woode to

[1] whitt mete: dairy produce (*lacticinia*).
[2] gravandes: greyhounds; *see note.*
[3] forme: nest.
[4] squatt: crouched.

kyll the wylde boore that men say is ther, they with ther currys and mastyffes and he with his greyhowndes and spanyelles. I pray gode prosper that that they goo about, and tomorow I wyll tell youe how they spedde. . . .

Yesterday, I promysede that I wolde tell youe how the hunters dide spede. herkyn a litle and I wyll. as sone as they were cum to the woode and hade sett on their dogges for to take the bore, streightways* every on of them faught so sore with another that it was very harde for the maisters to depart them.

103. I was yesterday at a noble fest wher I saw grete wast[1] of mettes and drynkes, and as sone as we hade dynde we were commaunde every mann be course to lede the daunce, and I ledde a fair woman by the honde that was so small[2] that a man myght a cleppyde[3] hire in both his hondys.

104. They do wysely that sende no Children to the universite but thei put them undre Creansers[4] to have the rule of them and of their money. for yf they wer not so ordeynde, they sholde waste all their money att dysse and Cardys in Cristmas tyme.

105. It is the guyse of all cristenn menn this day solemly to praye, fast, and go in procession, as well uplonde[5] as in the towne. so shall they do tomorowe and the nexte day.

[1] wast: abundance (*luxuriam*).
[2] small: slender.
[3] cleppyde: embraced.
[4] Creansers: house masters; *see introduction p. xxii.*
[5] uplonde: in the country.

Parishyns[1] mete eche other, and if they fynde eny crose by the way, ther thei tary anone. after the gospell is done, thei fall to ther metes that the wyffys brought from home for the nonys.

106. Tomorow ye shall se many menn go to the woode and cum home with grene bowys on ther sholders.*

107. — Art thou not wery of thies holydays?
— truly I am wery, and specially so many togedre, for I do not only lesse[2] moch cunnyng but also I wast awaye moch money in them.

108. Ther is more discontenuance, I trowe, in Oxforde then in eny other universite. for it hath ben nowe a moneth togedre that no scole hath be kept, and after the comyn worde they call this tyme vacacioun, and that not amysse, for many men that tyme levyth all studyes* and gevyth them alltogedre to sportes and plays.

109. I understande ther was a litle stryff in the towne the laste nyght. gode gyve grace that no mann be hurte ther, for I fere greatly, and specially because that many after such great festes lesse their wyttys other whillys.

*110.** I remembre not that ever I sawe a play[3] that more delityde me than yesterdays, and allbeit chefe prayse be to

[1] Parishyns: parishioners.
[2] lesse: lose.
[3] play: comedy (*ludicrum*).

the doer[1] therof, yete ar none of the players to be disapoyntede of ther praise, for every mann plaide so his partes that, except hym that plaide kynge Salomonn, it is harde to say whom a mann may praise before other.

111. All the yonge folkes almoste of this towne dyde rune yesterday to the castell* to se a bere batyde with fers dogges within the wallys. It was greatly to be wondrede, for he dyde defende hymselfe so with hys craftynes and his wyllynes from the cruell doggys methought he sett not a whitt be their woodenes[2] nor by their fersnes.

112. It was a worlde to se at thyes last gamys, but a myle hense, to beholde the shoters and renners, of the which sum, I doubte not, were very glade, and namely[3] they which bare away the best gamys,[4] and sum were sory and ashamede, namely they which went home agayne without eny rewarde wher they hade hopyde themselff befor to have bene worthye the best gamys.

113. Yesterdaye, I departyde asyde prively oute of the* feldys from my felows and went be myselfe into a manys orcherde wher I dyde not only ete rype apples my bely full but I toke away as many as I coulde bere.

[1] doer: author (*auctori*).
[2] woodenes: madness.
[3] namely: especially.
[4] best gamys: highest prizes (*dignissima premia*).

The Boy, His Master, and His Master's Rod

*114.** — why comyst thou hither?

— to se youe.

— whom, me?

— yee, the.

— and wyll thou do nothynge ellys?

— yes, I cum also to lurne.

— what wylt thou lurne?

— to speke latyn, to wryte right, and understonde all such thynges as be written allredy.

— ye say well.

— but I say—

— what?

— lurne thei with youe withoute betynge or nay?

— sum on ways, sum another; sum with betynge, sum with fairnesse.

— but what meanys shall I use to lurne withoute betynge? for I fere the rodde as the swerde.

115. — Gentle maister, I wolde desire iij thynges of you: onn that I myght not wake over longe of nyghtes, another that I be not bett when I com to schole, the thirde that I myght ever emong[1] go play me.

— Gentle scholar, I wolde that ye shulde do iij other thynges: onn that ye ryse betyme off mornynges, another that ye go to your booke delygently, the thirde that ye behave yourselff agaynst gode devoutely, all menn honestly, and then ye shall have youre askynge.

[1] ever emong: from time to time.

116. Felow, I besech the hertely to kepe oure counsell lest the maister know how unthriftely we myspent oure tyme yesterday, for yff he may know he wyl be verey angrye and not withoute a cause.

117. It is known or opyn that thou dydist this thynge. therfor say not nay, for than thou shalt dubble thy payn. for ye shal not displease our master sonner then yf ye wyll hyde your trespas (or elles, yf ye wyl not be known of your mysdoynge).

118. We yonge grammaryons most labor with all oure myght to please oure maister lest he be angry and avenge his anger upon us.

119. Felows, what is youre mynde? ar ye glade that the maister is recoverde of totheache? whatsumever ye thynke in youre mynde, I knowe my mynde. withoute doubte, and I were a riche mann I wolde spende a noble* worth of ale emonge goode gosseps so that he hade be vexede a fortnyght longer.

120. It were better to eny of us all to be dede than to suffre suche thynge as the maister hath sufferyde these iij dais agone in the totheache. forsoth, I know full well that [he]* myght nother ete nother drynke. and if I sholde not lye, I trowe he myght not slepe nother day nother nyght.

121. Felows, be gode I myght not chose but I muste nedes wepe when oure maister was now laste from home.

but have truste to my wordes, I dide it more for joye than for sorowe, and not withoute a cause, for and he hade byde here it shulde have repent me sore.

122. Yff ther be eny of my felows that love not my maister, I confesse that I am on.

123. — Thorughe thyne owne fawte thou hast made thyselfe oute of conseyte with thy maister. wher that afore thou were ever cheffe with hym and myght do moche and most in favour, nowe thou art nought sett by and nothynge can do for thyselfe nother for thy frendes.

— for he hath suche flaterers aboute hym, the which he taketh great hede to. for [their]* owne profytt thei be glade that thei be in favor with hym, and they be glade that I am oute of conseyt with hym.

124. — As fare as I can perceyve by my maisters wordes, he purposeth to go into the contrey for ij or iij days wher he woll sport hym and make mery. In the mean season, yf thou wolt, we may have licence to cum and speke togedre and do all thynges that please us. we have no nede to drede.

— but peradventure he woll fayn[1] sumthynge to brynge us in a foolys predicament.

125. We hade better to have benn hangyde than to have servede oure olde maister suche a touche.[2]

[1] fayn: feign, pretend. [2] touche: sly or mean trick (*facinus*).

126. Some thynke themselfe to olde and to great to be bett with the rodde, and I holde well with them, yf their condicions wer accordynge to their stature. howebeit, when I came first to this universite, ther was no difference in correccyon betwenn great and small. as all thynges in processe of tyme dekeyth, so goode rule gothe bakewarde.

127. After my jugement, on ought not to be favoryde more then another in a gramar schole, but every man muste be servede after his meryttes. thei that take hede diligently to their bookys must be favoryde or [prasyde]* and thei that do evyll most be punyshide.

128. I muste nedys marvell of the condicioun of sum of my felows, for whatsoever maistre they fortune to have they be never content, for they disdeyne to be undre, but ever I have thought to obey hym, whatsoever maistre he fortune to be.

129. It is not to be marvelede thoughe my maister be not riche, for he hath a great householde and a free.[1] and also he hath every day straungers and gestes with hym, and at the leste wey he dyneth with vj or vij denteth[2] dishes. yet he is no etar hymselfe, for oftentymes thei begyne to soupe before he sitt down, and sitt styll when he is gone.

130. Maister, I marvell greatly that ye be so importune unto me. I trowe I never deservede it. therfore, I do not all

[1] free: liberal. [2] denteth: dainty (*O.E.D.*, s.v. 'dainteth').

only monyshe youe, but also I exorte and praye youe that ye wolde be goode frende to me. and if ther be eny thynge in me that ye have nede of ye shall fynde me redy att all tymes.

131. Who callith me? what, youe, master? here am I redy to do eny thynge that ye woll commaunde me.

132. I laboure and enforce as moche as I can to please the maister in all thynges. the which, if I may bryng it aboute, I shall not do to hym so great a pleasure as to myselfe, for ther is no mann to whom I am more beholde to. howbeit, he doth nothynge for me for nought, but he of my father shall have rewardys accordynge to hys labours.

133. My maister hath promysede to do for[1] me if it lye ever in hys power, and so hath he donn now, that yf I spende my lyff for his worshipe, mesemyth I cannot deserve no part off hys meryttes.[2]

134. I went yesterday to bede in the begynnynge of the nyght because I porpossede to rise today before daylight that I myght delyver letters unto the caryare to my maistre. he is that mann, whatsumever encresyng of riches or worshippys I cum to, I shall never forgete hys meryttes done unto me.

[1] do for: benefit, do service for (*bene merere*).
[2] meryttes: favours.

135. We scolars ar more bounde to them that techith us goode than to them that brought us upe into the worlde, for why withoute connyng we ar as rude bestes which know not goode fro evyll.

136. What lettyde the, John, that thou couldist not construe thy lesson today to the maister? In goode faith, beleve me at fewe wordes: yf thou do so eny more I shall punyshe the grevously.

137. The rules that I must say to my maister ar scantly halfe writyn, wherfore I am worthy to be bett.

138. Though I sholde be bett now, and not withoute a cause, for I was so lewde[1] and so negligent to lesse my bookes, yete I am glade that at the laste I have fonde them agayne.

*139.** — Forgyve me this fawte, other for myn awne sake or for my mothers love. for I am of thes condicions, the more I am forgevyn, the lesse I fawte, and if ever I do another fawte, ye may well punyshe me for them both.

— Take thou hym and correcte hym thyselfe as the liste. I gyve the leve to take thy pleasure. and if he wyll not take it of the, as he is sumwhat stubberus,[2] brynge hym agayn to me that I may spytt oute my angre upon hym.

[1] lewde: bungling.

[2] stubberus: stubborn; *see note.*

— Now, sithe the mater lieth all in my handes, aske me mercy and take it. go thy way quyte[1] for this tyme. thou shalt not fynde me so herde to intret as thou supposyde. but bewar I take the not in such another brake.[2]

140. It wyll cum to my cours to have many a strype in the yere yf my [creanser]* kepe me at home every day tyll it be vij or viij of the cloke, for when I cum to schole I cannot qwyt[3] myself but with stryppys.

*141.** For what trespasse is this correcyon? by my trouth, I trow ther was never mann trespassede so greatly that he was worthy to be punysshede on this fascyon. but in feith it is no great marvell, for thou doist al thyng oute of ordure.

142. As sone as I was comyn into this straunge towne I mett with sum of my felows that wer right glade of my comynge, and they were not so glade of it as childrenn the which fere bettyng were sory* for yt.

143. The Master saith that we thorugh his mekenes and softnes be moch the worse, wherfor he hath promyside his faith but yf[4] we use oure latyn tongue better then we were wont we shal be sharpely punysshede.

144. Ther is nothynge that I desire more than to use softe and easye correccioun unto the scolars if I coulde thynke

[1] quyte: free, clear.
[2] brake: breach, violation.
[3] qwyt: acquit.
[4] but yf: unless.

it wolde most profytt them. but sum wolde never lurne yf thei wer sure thei sholde never be bett, and that may be provede, that onn weekes sufferance withoute betynge hurte them more than thei profytede ij before.

The Kinds of Scholar: Witty and Dull, Honest and Wanton

145. Sum scholars there be, but ther ar very few of them, that have goode wyttes and kepe styll in remembrance that as they here; and sum have a goode perceyvynge with them, such ther be many, but they forgete more in a day than they lurnede in iij. sum ther ar that be so dull which withoute great laboure cannot cane the leste thynge. but they that have goode wittes and diligent must be cunnynge whether they wyll or nay, and the other with difficulte.

146. I have no joye (or, deynte) to tech Children and namly dullardys or corrageles.[1] for that on it is certen, though he wyll lurne, cannot; the other, though he can, wyll not.

147. And scolars that have goode wyttes wolde gyve themselfe to ther bookes, thei coulde not chose but thei moste nedes be connynge. and so we se it daily provyde in

[1] corrageles: without spirit; *see note.*

them that so doth, for many ther be that have noble wyttes and trust in ther wytt to moche and put no diligence to it in the worlde, and therfor thei be deceyvede oftentymes at the conclusioun, and thei that be dull do excede them.

148. Mesemyth ther be many scholars nowadais i[n] oxforde the which be of very sharpe wytt. Notwithstondynge, they put not their myndes to their bookes nor to othere vertuse occupacioun which shulde be to them greate worshipe and to all their frendes great confort.

149. Is it not pyty that Childern, and many of them the which have qwyke wyttes, to be gevyn to japys and tryffylles, the which yf thei wolde gyve them to ther bookes shulde have no perys.[1]

150. Many of the scolars be of so sharpe a wytt that thei take shortely all thynges which be taught them. Which it sholde be a great pleasure for the maister to tech if thei wolde labor withall.

151. None of all my felows hath a quykker wytt than I, yet for all that, withoute great callynge onn and oftyn betyng, I cannot lurne.

152. Be a man indude with never so great a wytt, without great diligence he shall never move to cum to great cunnyng.

153. They that be sumwhat dull of wytt ought to recompence their ydylnes[2] with diligence and labor. for ther was

[1] perys: peers.

[2] ydylnes: dullness; *see note.*

never mann so dull, nother nothynge so harde for eny mann, but with diligence and labor he may overcome it. for manys wytt is like a felde, that the better he is dressyde and tyllyde, the lustyer he bryngeth forth. therfor no mann may excuse hym by dulnesse.

154. The maister knoweth what a slowe wytt I am of, for howbeit I profytt but litell, yf I kepe well in remembrance such thynges as I have lurnede I shall content hym.

155. I have marvell what it is that for all the exercyse that ye have in makynge of laten ye ar nothynge the better, wher I am sure that sum other hathe com to moche more thryfte with lesse laboure.

156. My father may be glade that ever he begote me, for and yf I lyff the age of malvornn hyllys* I shall yelde[1] hym a foole styll. and yete if he sende not the soner for me,* I shall shame hym, my maisters, and all the kyne that I com off.

157. It is better for the maister to tech C well condicyonde scholars and vertuse then xx evyll condycionde, for they that be of good condicions wyll bere away such thynges as be tought, not compellyde, and thei that be frowarde, the more payne they have, the lesse thei take hede.

158. Oure childern be so wantonn that if thei may have ther owne wyll thei car not whether ever thei thryve or never.

[1] yelde: produce for (*me semper fatuum habebit*).

159. When I remembre with myselfe the lyff and disposicyon of sum menn, I se great diversite emonge them. sum a mann may se that be gevyn to study and to cunnynge, also have great honeste in their lyvyng. Other, contrarywyse, be fare from thies condicions, the which if they have al thynges fonde[1] of their frendes yete they lyve unhonestely, takynge no heede nother to body nother to rayment.

160. It shulde be a pleasure to the maistre to tech such scholars as be quyke wyttide and wyll endevor themselff and leve theire barbarus waye and to bere awaye such thynges as be elegantlye taught them, but sum be so unthriftely disposede that they be gevyn alltogether to plais and sporttes and ydlenes, and such be to be compellide to their bookes with sharpe strippys.

161. It is herde for eny man to know the condicioun of such that be undre correccyon and do well by the reason of the maister, but yf they cum onys to their owne liberty a mann may knowe wonderfully an unthryfte from a goode onn.

162. I wyll begyne from hensforwarde to folowe the best of all my felows that I may gete the connynge and also the goode name that thei have by their diligence. Notwithstondynge, the maister thynketh otherwyse because I have benn of so untowarde dispo[si]cion* herebefore.

[1] fonde: found, supplied.

163. It is a comyn saynge that Children have most quyke wyttes when they be fastynge, but I fynde the contrary for that that I lurne in the mornynge is sone gone oute off mynde, for nyght studye dothe me moste goode.

164. It is a worlde to se the redy wyttes of sum menn in thynges to do, that for all the weyghtynes of maters, ther is nothynge to seke with them. as for me, I am of another disposicioun, for which whansoever eny weighty thyng is to do I am so unredy that I wot never in the worlde wher to turne me.

Schoolroom Talk

165. As sone as I am cum into the scole this felow goith to make water and he goyth oute to the comyn drafte.[1] Sone after another askith licence that he may go drynke. another callith upon me that he may have licence to go home. thies and such other leyth my scholars for excuse oftyntyms that they may be oute off the waye.

166. I mervell greatly what hede your creansers take to youe, for today ye be so many that ther is unneth[2] on place to sytt upon, and all the weke afore the on half of the schole wantyde.

[1] drafte: privy. [2] unneth: scarcely.

167. It is pite that so deynte a day and also so faire shulde be spent in sade[1] maters rather than in japys.

168. The Maister shulde do us all a great pleasur today yf he wolde gyve us leve to go make us mery this afternone while the weder is so fair, for it is doutefull yf hereafter ther wolde be so great a temperatnes of weder.

169. Yesterday, I toke my pleasure in the towne walkynge to and froo into the castell and aboute, but todaye, when I cam to schole I was welcummyde on the new fascyon.*

*170.** Wolde it not angre a mann to be lyde upon of this fascyon? thei say that I kepe a dawe in my chambre, but iwys[2] thei lye falsly upon me for it is but a pore Conye.[3]

171. I am wery of thi cumpany, for ther is no shrewde torne[4] done here but thou leist the fawte on me. also, the maister belevyth the.

172. Ther is no unhappy[5] dede done here emonge us but all the fawte is put upon me though I be not gylty. it botith me not to deny it. I hade rather in goode feithe dye then I wolde suffer thies wronges daily withoute a cause.

[1] sade: serious.
[2] iwys: surely (*bercle*).
[3] Conye: rabbit.
[4] shrewde torne: michievous act.
[5] unhappy: evil.

173. Thomas, I thanke the, for I was present and stode by the when thou complaynst of me to my Creanser.

174. John, methynkith that ther is no man more ungentle nother mor uncurtese to me then thou art, for allway thou complanest upon me withoute a cause to my Creanser. After my mynde I have not deservede thy evyll wyll but rather thy frendeshipe, for I have benn allway very delygent to do the a pleasure.

175. Nowadays, this is the maner: yf on take away enythynge from me, I wyll take shortely agayn from hym other hys cappe or hys knyff or sumthynge ellys. but this is not well. It wer better (or, more convenyent) when a mann doth me wronge that I shulde speke fair unto hym and besech hym as hertely as I can to leve,[1] and yf he leve not than it is best to shew it to the maister or to his ussher.

176. It is a noble sporte for me to here the fasynge[2] and brallynge of thies boys when they shal be accusede off custos[3] and to se how subtyll every man is in defendyng hymself.

177. I may blame the, William, for thyn unkyndnes that thou haste kepte my booke so longe.

[1] leve: cease.

[2] fasynge: facing, swaggering.

[3] custos: senior pupil, monitor.

178. — What! what gere[1] is this? whos papir is this?
— What wolde ye? it is myn.
— Whill ye have so goode stuffe (or, store) I truste ye wyll gyve me on leff.
— Nay, for gode, ye may thynke yourselfe well intretyde (or, well delt withall) yf ye gete so mych as half onn.

179. Felowe, mesemyth that thou hast our latyn and our verses. and if thou gyve me copy of them thou shalt have my favoure.

180. Ther is nothynge grevyth me so moche as for to be kepte alwey within the wallys and that I can have nothynge after my pleasure.

181. I have playde longe and forgete mych. the litle childern that were sett to schole with me be gone afore me fare. therfore, I must se (or, take hede) that I may overtake them.

182. Mesemyth thou art more mete to sytt in a sowters[2] shoppe with a sowters bristyll* then in a scole with a wrytyng penn.

183. Every mann provailith in their lurnyng save I, and be worthy of praisynge (or, to be praysede). I, unhappy felowe, cannot tell what goode I doo, clen without al virtue and all goodenes, well nygh.

[1] gere: goods, stuff.

[2] sowters: shoemaker's.

184. Yff thou come so slowly forwarde to lurne grammer it shal be longe or thou shalt thryff.[1]

185. My maister* prayth youe to take myn excuse at this tyme for I dide his herandes yesternyght hether and thether in the town.

186. We be so lett,[2] what with goynge forth of town and rennynge on erandes at home, that it is no marvell thoughe we thryve but small in oure lurnynge.

187. My maister sent me to enquer a certayn man of whom I sholde aske the keys of the librarye to be brought unto hym and I coulde not fynde hym noowhere. I cam agayn to my maister and than I myssede my latyn booke, but I cannot tell whether I loste hym rennynge or lefte hym in the Taverne.*

Friendship and Perfidy

188. Frende, I besech youe that ye wyl not be grevyde for that I have done. I confesse that I have done amysse, and sory I am. wolde to gode it were undone! but hereafter I wyl be better ware, and yf ther be enythynge wherin I

[1] thryff: thrive, succeed.
[2] lett: hindered.

may do youe a pleasure I wyl be glade to recompense this displasure with my diligent service. the meannwhile, I pray you of forgevynes.

189. Amongest all other pleasurs methynke it is not the lest but rather the moste to have a faithfull frende to speke all thynges to as he wolde to hymself. In whos talkynge a mann may put away all vexacions and hevynes, for he that is so close to hymself and shews no man his mynde a litell troble vexeth hym anone.

190. The gentylnes of a frende is never knowen verely tyll thou be in such case that withoute his helpe thou shalt suffre losse. then he wyll never go fro the whatsoever he suffre.

191. Likewyse as golde is provyde by fyre, so is a trusty frende knowne in trouble.*

192. Many tokyns ther be that I thynke verely thou lovest me with thyn hert, howbeit that it is longe contenuance or[1] very love be utterly knowne, for as Cicero* saith, men must ete togedre many bushels of salt before they know their frendes. for it is very harde to know faynde love from trew love withoute eny tyme it fortune to a mann.* for as golde is provede be fier, so faithfull love is provede be sum great juberty.[2]

193. A man shall knowe his frende best in adversite, ffor than all flaterers lyghtly[3] departith.

[1] or: before. [2] juberty: jeopardy, trial. [3] lyghtly: readily.

194. Howebeit I fere mych trouble that men suffer in this worlde, yete methynke ther is nothynge that I fere so sore to be troublede withall as with the unkyndnes of them that I have done moch for. A wise mann, yf he do provyde[1] what is to cum, it must nedys greve hym the lesse when it comyth to hym.

195. I am not a litell sorye, felow, to depart from the, what for the goode cumpany and kyndnes that I have fonde in the steryth[2] me greatly to abyde yf I wolde not do agaynst the commaundementes of my frendes. I wolde to gode that thou woldist go with me, for I am suer ther wyll nother mete nother drynke do me goode* but if I here from the every day of thy welfare.

196. I was very sory when I herde say that thy brother was dede in this pestilence for I have lost a gentle frende and a trusty. from oure first acquentance, the which was sens we were childern, we were companyde togedre in on house and undre onn maister and lightly we hade onn mynde in every mater. I cannot tell in goode faithe what losse may be comparede with this. the philosopher thought ther was nothynge more to be praisede than a goode frende.

197. John, it is vij yere agone sens I lovede the first. I dide never repent me of it for, as I trust, thou didest love me agayne, and as for my part thou shalt be sure while I lyve thou shalt have my goode hert. And I pray the, lete me

[1] provyde: foresee.

[2] steryth: stirreth.

have so of the that we may lede oure lyffes in love and frendeshippe for ther is nothynge more preciouse, after olde auctors, then true love and frendeshippe.

198. I am very sory, John, that thou sholdist depart hens, for I shall want goode company of the and manerly and plesaunt talkynge emonge.[1] but and I myght have myn owne wyll I wolde not be longe after the. but, as men say, he is bounde at a stake that may not do but as he is bidde, and so it is with me. but if I may onys gete the bonde fro my necke he[2] shall frete no more there.

199. And thou myghtest se with thyn Eyn how moche I love the thou woldist marvell of the habundance of it. for in goode feith and I sholde tell trouth it is greater to the than to all menn beside, and that shalt thou fynde yf thou have eny nede of my helpe. this shall I promyse the: I wyll not only spende my goode for the but the best bloode in my body.

200. I have lovede the specially sith we wer first acquentyde, and not withoute a cause, for thou hast ben the mann that hath done moche for me. but in goode soth I have lovede the moche more sens I sawe the so besely to do for thy frende, for tho[3] never leftist hym tyll thou haddiste made an ende of his mater.

[1] emonge: during this period.

[2] he: it.

[3] tho: thou.

201. What promyse soever thou make in my name I wyll fulfyll it though it put me to a great charge. thou shalt never fynde me other, by godes grace, then I promysede to the sumtyme.

202. I am very glade that dwellith in the contrey, fare from the cite and lurnede menn, and hath the a frende in my lordes courte. men say it is better to have a frende otherwhils[1] in courte than a peny in pursse. *

203. The kyndnes of youe is to be consideryde of me, for ye be evere redy to do me goode.

204. We wer sory that thou wer hens so longe, belevyng that we sholde never have senn the agayn, for [we]* may not forbere[2] thi absence.

205. It is very harde nowadais to fynde eny feithfull frende, for I broke the secretnes of my hert todaye to onn that I lovede best of all the worlde and he thrughe the utterynge of my consell hath causede many to be very angerde with me.

206. I have desirede my frende I cannot tell how ofte that he wolde do me a pleasur in a lytell mater, but I coulde never gete it off hym. methynke he is sumwhat unkynde

[1] otherwhils: sometimes. [2] forbere: endure.

for yf he hade graunt it me he hade be never the worse and yete he hade done me a goode turne.

207. I mervell wher thou gottist this unkyndnes. for whatsoever thou doist aske me, be it never so goode, I may forde[1] to gyve it the, but if I aske the eny thynge thou denyst it utterly.

208. I cannot tell by my trouth whos wordes a mann may trust to nowadays that he sholde not be disseyvede falsly. I myself hade a frende (as I thought) that I lovede specially that made me a sure promysse as eny mann coulde that he wolde do for me in such a mater as I hade to do. but, as I provede sens, my mater had gonn forth as I wolde have hade it and he hade not benn agaynst it, and so falsly he dyde agaynst his promysse and he hath donn agaynst our olde love and frendeshipe.

209. I trow it hath fortunede to me as it hath fortunede but to few menn, for thei that I do most for be oftyn tymes ageynst me, but sum of them be not all only ageynst me in my maters but also labor how thei may trouble me.

210. Ther is no mann that is more diligent in all your maters and more lovynge to youe than I am, and yet methynke the more serviable I am to youe the more straunge ye be to me. I wote not how I may gete your love. I wote I have deservede that thou sholdist love me; howbeit, I trow thou lovest me no mann lesse.

[1] forde: afford, manage; *see note.*

211. I have desirede my frende I wote not how often that he wolde do me a pleasure in a litell mater, but I coulde never gete it of hym. methynke if he hade grauntede it to me he hade be never the worse hymselfe. I woll not be angrye with hym, but if he desire enythynge of me I shal be as straunge to hym.

212. John, methynke thou art very unkynde to complayne off me withoute a cause. I am sure yf thou lokist well aboute the thoue was never better delt withall. but if thou knewist I hade done the wronge it hade ben accordynge the frendely to have made thy complaynt to me of thy wronge; and it hade not be remedide than thou myghtist lawfully to complayn.

213. I herde say thou were very angrye with me but I cannot tell wherfore for I am sure I love the, no mann better, nother dide man more kynder turnys, yf thou wolt call them kynde, nother I offendide the in none other mater that I know of, withoute ye call this offence, a man to aske his owne dutye.[1] and yf thou do so, I woll have non other juge but thyselfe, that thou doste not as thou oughtest to do.

214. Ther was never mann in the worlde so uncurteasly intreatide withall as I am. for he that I delyverde onys from parell of deth hath take away all the goodes that I hade, and that with false meanys. thus he quyte me agayn that when I dide hym goode he hath don me evyll.

[1] dutye: payment, debt.

215. And the tydynges be trewe that were brought unto me my mater is dasshide. menn be false and so unstedefast of their promyse nowadais that a man shall not fynde whome he shall trust to. for he that maketh the fairest face and spekith the fairest wordes shall sonest deceyve the. I hade a mann the which I hade wenyde hade ben my frende the which hade my mater in honde, and hath honge longe in his hondes to be pletyde, and now, as menn say, he is the most enmy that I have.

216. Yff eny trust were in them in whome sholde be most trust, I sholde not laboure. howbeit, I doubte not tyme wyll come that thei shall repent them of their owne miserable dealynge and behavynge. notwithstondynge, I wyll determe[1] nothynge grevously agaynst them tyll I poundre in my mynde, not what they have deservede, but what it semyth[2] me for to do to them, lest they that be nowe my frendes for my sharpnes (that I were loth) sholde forsake me.

217. I herde say that thou sholdist report with suche of thyn acquentance that I have deceyvede the in a mater. I praye the have noo mo suche wordes of me yf thou wolt have us deale together after this. for ther is nothynge that I love worse than a man to speke unkyndely of me by-hynde my bake.

218. The last weke when I askyde of my detter the money which I lent hym he full uncurtesly, whych I wolde never

[1] determe: determine. [2] semyth: beseems.

have wenyde for the olde love which was betwenn us, not only dissymylede hymself to have borowde money of me but untruly denyde it.

219. The laste weke ther was sende me from my cuntrey (ther wher I was borne) CC wardens and as many perys, and now thorow this sharpe froste every thurde pere begynnyth to wexe roton. yf I hade known it before, I wolde thrugh the departynge[1] them amongyst my companyons have gete me many frendys.

Thieves and Cheats

220. I was yesternyght late at Carfaxe* with strangers. when we hade stonde styll a while we perceyvede that ther were certeyne getters,[2] and as sone as we saw them I ranne away as faste as I coulde that for overmych hast I fell in the myer.

*221.** Many of scholars be of this disposicioun that they wyll kepe themselfe in their chambre from mornynge tyll nyght for to be seen vertuouse felows, but neverthelesse when it is nyght they wyll rushe oute in harnes[3] into the stretes like as foxis doth oute of their holys for to robe menn

[1] departynge: sharing. [2] getters: roisterers (*grassatores*).
[3] in harnes: armed.

of their money if they mett eny, and of this maner the moste myschevyst taill of a dragonn is hyde undreneth the kynde[1] of a doufe.[2]

222. I trowe I was borne in an unhappy season. ther is no man in the worlde to whom fortune is more contrary then to me. I have wysshede a thousande tyms that as sone as I was borne that by and by[3] I hade benn delyverde oute of thys worlde agayne. I com never frome my frendes* but I hade sum mysfortune. for the last tyme that I com hydre a great cumpany of thevys compaside me about and toke away all that I hade.

223. My brother came to me before it was day, full of sorowe and hevynes, and shewde me that he was robbyde of all the goodes that he hade. I confortyde hym as well as I coulde for methought he was marveliously disposide to many thynges.* I coulde se no better way to confort hym but to shew this example: tha[t]* thike[4] menn that [have]* nowght but from day to day lyvethe as merely[5] as they that gadern great goodys.

224. My father and my mother removede yesterday with all their stoffe of householde from hense to londonn. they lefte nothyng here behynde them but pultre, the which is put to my kepynge. I fere me but yf I take not the better hede that thies jetters[6] a nyght season wyll stele them away when I am not war.

[1] kynde: nature.
[2] doufe: dove.
[3] by and by: immediately (*protinus*).
[4] thike: those (thilk).
[5] merely: merrily.
[6] jetters: see *getters*, *220*.

225. I knowe full well that a mann shulde fynde very few men to whos wordes he may trust for within few dais ther cam a felow oute of my cuntrey and saide that he was dwellyng in the same town ther I dwellide and was borne, and as I understode after, for non other cause but to fynde the meanys to borow money of me, for he saide that he hade spende all his money and hade a great jorney to goo.

226. Within thies few dais ther came a certeyn man to me and shewde that he hade a great acquentaunce with me, and I remembre not that ever I hade sen hym, and when he hade prolongede his comunicacioun all his talkyng come to that he myght borowe money of me. I trowede it was not wisdome to lende eny money withoute I were sure of the payment.

227. This day sevenyght, when I was at londonn cummyng to Oxforde, it was shewde me of ij ways that the onn was full of thevys and the other way I coulde not go for the brygges were brokenn upe. I wolde rather se to my helth than to my profitt and than I bydde[1] tyll I myght have more company.

228. It is great pite that sum menn sholde lyffe and have ther helth. thei be so ungracious and so light of ther handys* that thei thynke thei be never well at ease but when thei be doynge sume myschefe.

229. It is pite that a juge sholde have eny compassion of

[1] bydde: waited.

eny errant theffe, and namly those that wyll kyll men after that thei have robbyde them of ther goodys.

230. This potecarys crafte is most fullyst of deseyte of all craftys in the worlde, for thies potecarys lake no deseyte in weynge their spice, for other the balance be not like or ellys the beame is not equall or elles they wyll holde the tonge of the balance styll in the holow with their fyngar when they be in weynge. they care nothynge for the welth of ther soule so they may be ryche.

231. Many scholars of this universite wolde spende wastfully all their fathers goodes in japys and trifulles this faire yf they myght have it at their liberte. for thies londyners be so craftye and so wyly in dressynge their gere so gloriusly that they may deceyve us scholars lyghtly.

232. He that hath money enough to cast away lete hym pike hymselfe[1] to the faire and make a bargyn with the londyners, and I doubte not but er he depart thei shall make hym as clen from it as an ape fro tailys,* for thei study nothyng in the worlde ellys but for to deceyve menn with fair spech.

233. The merchantes and shipmenn salynge over diverse sees go ofte in great jeopardy oute of all mesure, for oftentymes all their goodes be taken away be robbers of the see,

[1] pike hymselfe: be off.

with tempest and shipewreke. but the most jeopardy of all is when thei be taken and caryde into straunge contreys and laide in prison tyll thei be dede, and sumtyme slayne and caste over shipeborde.

Good Counsel

234. When I speke to the for thy welth,[1] thou thynkith fowle of it, yet for all that thou shalt be the first that shall repent it. therfor do after my counsell, tho I be not very wyse, and it shal be for the best.

235. Childern ought nether to chyde nother to fyght. I trust that ye wyll not do so. I wyll have youe to be softe, gentle, and styll.

236. Though a mann have all the noble gyftes of natur, as similitude of statur, quyknes of body, bewtynes* of shape, yete and yf his condicyons wyl not agre and be acordynge he is litle sett by, for it is acordynge for a yonge mann to be sobre and gentle and not to be a pyker of quarelles nor to be stobur, not of no frowarde stomake, as I know sum be whos prowde stomake must be delayde and swagyde with sharpe stryppys.

237. It is the part of good yonge menn, as an eloquent and an holy mann writyth, for to have the drede of almyghty

[1] welth: profit.

gode and to do reverence to hire[1] father and mother, to obey olde menn, to kepe hire chastite (or, virginite), and not to dispyse lowlynesse (or, humylite), to love mercy and shamfastnes which thynges be unto youghe a faire ornament (or, bewtye).

238. Sylver is a faire thynge, golde is a faire thynge, preciouse stonys is mor worthe. Is ther enythynge comparable to thies? yee, verely, ther is, and that passith it. for after most wyse mennys myndes, I tell youe vertue passith thies more than can be shewde, which whosoever hath, for to use plautes proposicion,* he hath all thynge.

239. Virginite, how may I extoll it! truly I cannot tell. it passith eny manys wytt, not only myn, to expresse the bewty of it. ther is the floure that hath no spott, the floure of clennesse and honeste, the floure havyng the most swetest savor, passynge precious stonys in bewty, be they never so bright and oriant, a floure of hevyn growynge in the garthen of vertue, the which whosoever have it in his breste and kepith it he cannot be destroyde by noo maner of ways.

240. Nother the purpyll rose nother the whitt lyllys ar to be comparede in bewty unto vertu. she passeth in hire fairnesse bothe golde and preciouse stonys. also, contrary wyse, ther is nothynge more fouler than vice and synne.

241. Iff ye desire (or, covytt) to gete (or, cum) into many menys favour and have true and trusty love, trust not to

[1] hire: their.

mych in youre fayrnes, strenght, wytt, in your fathers and mothers goodes, ffor all such thynges be undre fortunes daunger[1] and transitory. lete your trust be in vertu only and that shall gete youe love, praise, and worshype, and shall holde (or, kepe) yt evermore.

242. We most labor with all oure poure that we may profytt as well in goode maners as in connynge, for as wyse men say a man withoute them, be he never so connynge, is reputede for a dawe.

*243.** — But lete us leve this gere and turne to the preceptes of goode lyvynge wherby we may guyde (or, govern) the frailte of oure youghe. I put youe in remembrance of late that ye shulde voide mych claterynge and so do ye, specially when a mann goith aboute to angre youe and begynnyth chydynge or pykyth quarrellys, then be not ashamede for to be dombe. lete your communicacyon be also lowly. sett not a litell by humylite, for it is a fayre vertue which if it myght be sene with a manys ey it wolde plese hym, be youe sure, more (and it were after your awne jugement) than the whyte lillye or the purpull rose.

— Shulde he please? quod I. ye, gode wote, very sure withoute doubte.

244. The best token in yonge menn is shamefastnes, for whatsoever vice or fawte be put upon them, whether it be true or false, while thei be of that age, anone to be ashamede and to blushe in the face. for he that is past onys the bondys of shamefastnes he is redy to fall to all myscheffe.

[1] daunger: dominion.

245. I thynke it be best for every man to leve unthryfty cumpanye and draw to vertuse, for nowadays we be more redy to do evyll then to goodnes, and moreover ther be many that be redy to provoke and entyse a man to evyll and he be not well ware.

246. Mesemyth it is very goode and profitable emongest yonge men to be conversant with them the which may make them better, namly whils youghe of naturall dis-posicion is rather to evyll then to goode. neverthelesse, ther be many wysar in their yough then in their age.

247. Ther is nothynge mor perliouse to yonge menn than evyll company, the which withdrawes ther myndis, and specially theis that be most goodly and well-wyttyde, to unthrifty pleasurs and rule[1] fro ther bookes, and so ther be moo loste for lacke of goode creansers then thorow the defawte of ther techers, the which* sholde kepe them fro suche cumpany.

248. Hurt no mann be myn advyse leste thou be hurt agayn, for I that withoute greff[2] take wronge wyll ons avenge the agayne.

249. It is nede for a mann when he shall cume first into a straunge cuntre so to behave selfe that all thynges that he doth may be acceptable.

[1] rule: behaviour. [2] greff: complaint.

250. I have herde wyse men say many tymes that a mann sholde not beleve every fleynge tale, and he that wyl be vengyde on every wroth, the longer he lyveth the lesse he hath.*

251. Offise or dignite getyth favor and great name, but office withoute honeste bryngeth a mann to great rebuke and shame.

252. Pacience is a great tokyn of wisdome, likewise as hedynes or testines is a tokyn of foly.

253. He that hath but litell and can be content is better at ease than he that is riche and alwaye careth for more.

254. I am better content with a litell goode than he that hath goode enough and knouth not how he may spende it honestly.[1]

255. I counsell youe, be not aferde to speke for your availe, for it is a comyn sayng, 'spare speke, spare spede.'*

256. It is an olde proverbe, 'as wyly is the foxe as the hare,'* the which in myn opinion cannot be alway true, for wher the foxe was iij dais in the scole, the hare sportyde hym in the feldes takynge no thought for the kynges sylver.

[1] honestly: properly, discreetly.

257. I have provyde this later dais a thynge that I shall never forgett, that when a mann doth a thyng rasshly and withoute advysment he wyll sone repent it. therfore hereafter I am utterly advyside to take deliberacioun which my father warnyde me oftyn that I shulde take in all maters, sayng many a tyme that comyn poynt, 'an hasty man lakkith never wo.'*

258. Methought ther was never thyng more periloser in use emonge menn than thies flaterers by the which many a man is deceyvede. for ther is no man that can sonner be deceyvede then to gyve credence to a flaterer, the which wyl not speke in trouthe but ever he wyll speke in thynges that be moste for his availe, or tho that he thynkith may moste please.

*259.** Sith that gode almyghty, beynge conversant in erth, taught his disciples to beware of those maner of people the which loke like sayntes, not withoute a cause, meseemyth of a congruence it sholde be greatly for oure profytt to flee ther cumpany, for when thei speke moste fairest to a mann thei wyll sonyst deceyve hym.

260. Emonge all maner of vicys I have hatede allway dobull tonguede felows which befor a manys face can speke fair and flater and behynde his bake doth say the worste.

261. Emonge poyntes of nurture that is on, that when a mann commendith youe ye make curtesy, and yf on dis-

commende youe verely it wolde be on youe to holde your peace. ever have few wordes, holdyng of tonge, and closenes be commendide. copyousenes of wordes and great langage is commonly reprovyde (or, takyn as a vice).

262. Why castith thou away this praty booke as it were nought worth and a thynge that coulde do no service or goode? ther is nothynge but it wyll serve for sumwhat, be it never so course. lay hym upe ageynst another tyme; peraventure ons ye wyll sech after hym. lurne to be a goode husbonde.[1]

263. Service is none heritage,* and that we se daily, for and the maister like not his servaunt, or the servaunt his maister, they moste depart. Furthermore, we se but few successours cheryshe suche servauntes as were great with ther predecessours. therfor, my frende, take hede to thiselfe while thou haste a maister and maist do moche with hym, that thou maist have wherwith to lyve whan he is gone. I say not this for nought, for I knowe myselfe many a praty mann that was well at ease but late agone in a goode service, maisterles, hable to bere the kynges standerde, as wolde serve full fayn withoute wages for mete, drynke, and clothe. These be ashamede to begge bycause they were well at ease so late dais. thei dare not stele for fer of hangynge. tell me howe shall thei lyve? thei can no handy-crafte, thei cannot skyll of husbondrye, thei thynke it a foule shame to fowle ther handes.

[1] goode husbonde: provident man.

264. When a mann is in his lusty yough and in his parfytt age, thoo he be never so poore, yete while he hath all his lymes and cheffe strenght every man wyll gladely accept hym to his servyce, but when age comyth upon hym he is shortely sett nought by and lightly is put oute of his servyce.

265. Many onn while their frendes be alyve, takynge no care at all, gyve them to sportes and pleasurs, and after their deth, when they have non to go to for sukker, nor cane skyll on no crafte, be fayne to go a-beggynge.

266. Iff a man sholde sende letters to a great prince, it forsithe[1] greatly what tyme they be delyverde to hym, whether they be gevyn when he is troblede and vexide or els when he is mery. therfor I commande my servaunt that I sent to the kynge that he sholde wayt a season to delyver his letters. for lykewyse as they that cum to us oute of season greve us so lykewyse letters when they be gevyn oute of season do displease.

267. Methynke it is no litell jape[2] for a mann to shew openly eny connynge in so noble an universite wher be menn of clere and of subtill wytt and in ther connynge as well spede as they can be, and lightly a mann cann shewe nothynge in no faculte but ther be sum men can shew it as well as he. wherfore he may not well arre,[3] for and he do he nede not doubte sum men wyll take hym in his fawte.

[1] forsithe: is of importance. [2] jape: trick, accomplishment. [3] arre: err.

268. I am glade that thou hast made an ende of thyn office of the proctorshipe* for it was a great charge unto the, but I am more glade that thou hast behavede the so in it that every mann was glade to say well by the to thy great worshipe and of thy frendes. for it is a great profytt to eny mann that can behave hymselfe well while he is in office.

269. Thomas, thou arte worthy to be commendide for bycause thou spakist yesterday so well, so wysely, so nobly for the comynwelth. methynke thou didist but thy duty, for every goode cytisyn is bounde not alonly to prefare the comynwelth befor his private welth but also if eny jeopardy cum that he be redye to put hymselff in jeopardye.

270. I have gevyn youe a few preceptes not as though I were an informar or instructor of maners, for why I have nede of an informar myselfe, but bycause it is a pleasant maner of connynge and profitable in especiall agayn bycause a man shulde lurne moch by techynge. I wolde I coulde please bothe youe and me therin.

Men and Manners of Antiquity

271. The olde Romans hade so great a love to the comynwelth that rather thei wolde sley themselfe than they wolde departe from that that was the comyn welth, as we rede

of the noble mann Cato that herde that he sholde be takyn of Julius Cesar and so to be brought in servitute. he slew hymselfe, and many other were so customyde in that maner of deth that they thought it was the best deth that coulde be.

272. It is no mervell allthough olde auctorus, as Virgill and tully and many other of the Romans, were more eloquent than the auctors that be nowadais, for they sett their myndes so greatly in connynge that no desire of great goodys, nor voluptuosnes of fleshe, no covyteisnes of worshipe, no vayneglory of batell, no worldy laboure coulde trouble their myndes, but gave themselff utterly to vertu, puttynge away all maner of thyngys which myght withdrawe them from studye.

273. Hannyball, the capten of the cartagenensis, when he warride so myschevously agaynst the romans, he clymyde upon the mountans with his oste (the which* defendide ytalye as yt hade benn wallys) wher before they were never comyn upon for hyght and sharpnes. but he made a way thrughe them and fretyde[1] them in with venegyr and brymstone.* that was the wisdome of the captayne that made a way by crafte wheras nature denyede.

274. And a man wolde rede all the cronycles he shall not fynde more nobler gestes[2] then were done oftentymes by the Romans, pompeius beynge capteyne. and yf fortune

[1] fretyde: destroyed by corroding.

[2] gestes: actions.

hade not benn agaynste hym when he was overcome of Julius Cesar, he myght have be well callede the most noble capteyn of all menn. but the last ende of hym, when he was overcome, made his other noble dedys not apere as they were.

275. It shal be a great greff to a yonge sowger to lye in the colde wynter nyghtes in their tentes that were wonte to lye upon a softe fether bedde, but yete the hardenes of warre nowadais is nothynge lyke the olde warre of the Romans, the which all the wynter longe never suffrede ther sowgers to cum to no towne nor house, what froste, what snowe, what tempest, what colde that ever was, and by that use and custome they myght suffre colde and hungre, but owrs ar so delicate that anone they ar destroyde.

276. Somtyme of oure olde fathers ther was great diligence put in Chosynge of a captayne, and not withoute a cause, for it is not a litell difference undre whose ledynge a man shall fyght. for we rede in the olde Cronycles that when the batell went to the worse of the on partye[1] and wer fledde, because of ofte callynge agayn of the Capteyn they retornyde and the batell was begone afresshe and at the conclusion thei hade the hyer honde of their Enmys. and of the contrary parte, what hapynede be unlukky ledyng of the capteyn it is light[2] to knowe.

277. The imbacitours in the olde season were moche more sett bye then thei be nowadais, for we rede in the

[1] partye: side.

[2] light: easy.

Cronycles that the Romans destroide citeys because their imbacitors wer evyll entretyde. thei thought ther offence so great for to hurte the imbacitors that thei coulde not be content with no lesse punyshment but with other[1] destruccioun both of town and men.

Epistolary Scraps

278. Right wel belovede father and mother, we long greatly to se youe, whose selfe sight was wonte allway to be to us a great conforte.

279. In goode faith I cannot expresse in wordes how sorye that I was after it was shewde me that thoue haddist loste thy father, so worshipfull a mann and so speciall a frende as he was to me. In goode feith, I trowe and I hade loste myn owne father I coulde not have ben moche more sorye, and forsothe not withoute a cause, for he was the mann that, by as moch as ever I cowlde spye by hym, lovede me as well as I hade be his own son.

280. Because that I have non answer of my laste letters I shew (or, reherse) to the agayn the tenor of the same. thou knowst well I have a brother at paris* and it is not unknown to the how well sen he is in humanite.[2] I have

[1] other: utter; *see note.*

[2] humanite: humane letters.

ben movede ofte seasons and exhortede both by the letters and by the messangers of hym, and now in conclusion am constranede to writt unto hym of this mater. I aske the consell that be thy deligence and helpe, as thou art a wyse man, I may deserve thankys of hyme.

281. I have perceyvede by many tokyns afor this, both by letters and by thy gentylnes, that I be well belovede of the, but now I doubte whether I be so or noo.

282. The tydynges that thou toldist me late made me very hevy. Whether thou didest it for the nonys to make me sory I cannot tell. Another felow tolde me the same; it may fortune ye were agreyde before. I pray to gode it may be founde false. I pray the tell me the trouth and ease my mynde.

283. Thou desiriste of me in thy last letters that I shulde have the Commendide specially to thy maister. my wyll is goode for to do it, but methynke I have onn occasion for to quarell with the, for of all menn that be longynge[1] to hym thou only woldiste never sende me worde how fare I was oute of conceyte with thy maister. many menn shewede it to me, when I coulde not cast the cause in my mynde, that he put upon me that I sholde lye wayt for hym in a certeyn nyght and withoute he hade gott hym-self rather[2] away that I sholde have cume upon hym with a knyff.

[1] longynge: belonging.

[2] rather: more quickly.

284. I understonde that thou art sumwhat wroth with me, and I marvell for what cause it sholde be, withoute it be, as I suspecte, that sum of myn enmys hath brought sum shrewde[1] talys of me to the. such talys ought not to be belevyde nother to be herde of a frende. for I have not provokede menn to talke evyll of the but only reprovyde them, for when sum men complaynede of thy nygarde-shippe I saide thou didiste like a wise mann to be streyte[2] in gevynge of other menys goodes.

285. I am very glade that thou didest commende my mynde and counsell, which if your frendes wolde have taken it hade be no labor to have recoverde both their goodes and myn. Now, what wyl be the ende of this mater I cannot tell. now your adversaries put me in blame that I sholde be chefe doere of the kyllynge of the maire of the towne for non other cause but to sett all his frendes agaynst me.

286. As longe as I was in doubte whether thy counsell dide me mor goode or hurte I wrote nothyng unto the, not bycause I dide not thynke thi counsell goode but bycause I feryde I sent the no worde howe the mater fortunede thou woldist have be sory for my sake. Wherfor I loke after no letters agayn, but I desire the to cum that we may comyn[3] togeder what way we may take in all maters and how we may brynge forth this seasonn.

[1] shrewde: malignant.
[2] streyte: thrifty.
[3] comyn: consult; *see note.*

287. I am glade that the mater is brought aboute after thi mynde. In goode faith, I was afrayde onys that it wolde never cum to the poynt that it is at nowe, methought menys myndys were so ferre from the, and I trowe and thou haddist not take that way as thou dideste it hade never be brought abowte.

288. As sone as I can gete eny leysure I shall certefye the of all the maters that be done here, the which I wolde have done att this tyme yff I myght for besynes.

289. I wolde thynke thou woldest do me a great pleasur yf thou se this pension paide to my frende of that money that thou shalt receyve here, the which was owede to hym the yere passede, for though I myght have taken it to many that cam to the fro hens yet I coulde not be sure of it nother yet coulde not do it withoute coste. Wherfore when thiselfe maist do it at ease withoute eny lost, I pray the do it.

290. I knowe by thy last letters that it was no small love that thou haddist to me for thei were as full of swetnes of thi part as they coulde be and shewdist utterly thy goode mynde to me, but moste of all in the last ende of them wheras thou writest that thou hast payde the money that I borowde. doubte the not it shall not be longe or thou have it agayne with great thankes.

291. William, thyne owne mann and also myn, when he hade come to me very late in the nyght and saide that he

wolde departe the next day very erly, I tolde hym I wolde sende letters unto the and prayede hym that he sholde aske them. I wrote them in the nyght and he came not agayn. I trowe he hade forgete them. Notwithstondynge, I have sent them by myn owne servaunt to the, but he tolde me the next day thou wolde departe oute of thy heritage.

292. I have ben aqueyntede a longe season with sulpice brother callede symprony the which shall delyver my letters to the.

293. Forsothe, I se that I am greatly belovede of the ffor because that thou sendist ij letters to me by the Cariar the last weke, but I am sory that he that brought them came to me when I sholde sytt downe to souper, but after that I understode of his comyng I arose anone and wrote to the onn letter in the which thou shalt knowe all my mynde.

294. The day after I come to Oxforde, the Cariar brought me a letter from the which at that tyme I coulde not gyve answer to all thynges as I wolde and as thou desirest. for in goode faith I hade so litell leysure that I coulde not do suche maters as thou woldest have me to do. therfor I have sent the worde in thies letters that I have done all thynges that thy letters made mencioun of, and I trust to thy pleasure.

295. I have receyvede a letter from my father and mother within this iij dais or iiij at farest by the which I undrestode

that they thought that I was negligent for because I sent them nonn ofter worde by letters of myn helth. notwithstondynge, I was not to be blamede for ther past no mann by me which that I thought shulde cum to them but I sent letters by them.

296. I wolde not suffre the Cariar to go into thy contrey withoute my letters to the, whose pleasure thoue haste provede for because thoue sendist no letters to me by the cariar commynge agayn to Oxforde. forsothe, by thy licence that I may say it, thou hast done unkyndely and ungentely when thou sendist letters to other men and none to me, and forgettith me, onn of thi best frendes.

297. I marvell greatly, John, that this longe while I hade no letters from the, nother so moche as a tokyn, the which and thou haddist remembrede the right well it sholde have made me to remembre the the more. at the lest way, it sholde have causede me to thynke that I hade be in thi remembrance and not forgetyn.

298. I have longe waytede for letters from the and that in vayn, for in goode faith and thoue knewst how moch goode thei do me thou woldest not kepe so great a pleasure fro me, for, and I sholde not lye, ther is no greater a pleasur to me. therfor, I pray the, and thou couldest do it, to make me evyn full of them.

299. I wyll go to the cariar for to wytt (or, know) whether he hath delyverde a cople of letters that I toke hym the last weke to bere to an speciall frende. I know for a suerty they

shal be welcome when he hath receyvede them. many thynges I specifide therin which wyll please hym (or, be to hys pleasure) and certayne thynges I have lefte oute which I wyll shew be mowth (or, in presens) when he is cum to towne.

300. I have receyvede ij letters fro the writtyn onn maner wyse, the which methought it was a tokenn of thi diligence, for I undrestonde that thou didest labor that letters that I longe lokyde after sholde be brought unto me. of the which I hade double profytt in compariciou. harde for me to juge whether I sholde make more of thy love to me-wards or off thy goode wyll to the comyn-welthe.

301. This day iiij days I hade a letter from the the which made me very glade. for it was writen in them that thou didest purpose to have come and sen me or thys tyme. the which yf thou haddist done thou couldest not have done me a greater pleasure. but thou makist me as sory now as I was glade before bycause thou camyst not at the day apoyntede. and withoute I knewe that thou woldist come* shortly I sholde be more sory.

302. The seconde day of septembre I receyvede a letter fro the by the whiche I understode that thou sholdist departe oute of Oxforde shortly. In goode faith, I was sorye when I redde it, and not withoute a cause, for I shall lake a goode companyon of the with whom I was wonte to be mery withall, for if I lackyde ought, aske and have.*

303. Thy brothers letters the which I receyvede of the Cariare the day before that he went towardes londonn pleasede me well, but I am very sory that he hath taryde so longe from us because that I have wantyde the great pleasure of his conversacioun, but I am very glade [that]* he, beynge absent, hath getyn all thyng at his pleasur with great worshipe.

304. I hade come agayne iij days agone but I was taryde with certeyn men of myn acquentance, nother I coulde not gete away by no mean. In goode feith and I shall not lye, they taride me with my wyll, for ever they have ben to me speciall frendes and we have ben asundre a great while.

305. I thonke the as hertely as I can thynke for the great chere, gentylnes, and goode fare that thou madist me the last tyme that I was with the. for I shall say trouth and flater not a whitt: I have ben in many places where I have ben welcome and hade great chere; better chere than thou madist me I hade never of no mann. And yf it please the to come in this contrey, I wyl not promyse the so great chere, but thou shall have suche as I can.

Polite and Impolite Conversation

306. I was purposede yesternyght to speke to the of a thyng prively but today, by my trouth and yf thou wylt beleve me, I cannot tell what it was. loo, what a wytt I have!

307. Ye be welcome. wyll it please youe to sytt or stonde be the fyre a litell while? the nyghtes be prety and colde* now. a roste apple ye shall have, and fenell seede.* Mor we wyl not promyse youe.

308. Ther is no mann more welcom or more gladesum. felows, take in (or, brynge in) this gentlemann* to oure maistre. I muste go call a certen stranger, but I wyl not tarry. I wyll pluke upe my gown and renne, in feith, every fote for youre sake.

309. John, I cannot expresse in wordys how glade I was whan I herde tell thou was comyn to town that I myght make the sum cher after my power, for such as thou madist me I cannot, but whatsoever it be thou shalt have it with a goode wyll, and so I pray the to thynke.

310. Howebeit that I was goynge another way before I mett with the, yete now bycause we have be longe asundre we wyll not so shortely depart but I wyll lay all thynges asyde and goo with youe whethersoever ye wyll have me to make mery, for I thanke youe for my great chere that ye made me at home when I was laste with youe, for I am so moch beholdenn to youe and to yours and specially to your wyffe that I can never make youe amendes.

311. — Loo, I am Cum.

— ye be welcum. but suffre me, I pray youe, nowe to wrytt oute a letter that I have begone, and it be no payn to

youe. ye, and cum agayn tomorowe at the same tyme; ye shall have attendance with all corage[1] and diligence.

312. It is shame to speke it, John, how thou haste behavede thyselfe yesterday emonge thy company.

313.— How solde the bookeseller this booke, I pray the? — surely better chepe then thou peraventure wolde sett it that it coste.

314. As I was chepynge of a booke, ther cam onn that proferde mor than I and bought it oute of my handes.

315. Ther was onn of the strangers of courte that wer at evynsonge yesternyght at oure church that lokede on me excedyngly, for he never turnede his ey. truly I thynke I have ben acquentyde with hym yf I coulde brynge it to my mynde in what cuntrey.

316. Haste not thou known afore this the man that we mett yesterday at afternone as we walkede into the feldes? forsoth, as they say, he is of great reputacion emongest the best spede and the noblest men of this universite and as I have herde oftyn tymes say, not withoute a cause, forsoth, but for his great cunnynge and his noble vertuse.

[1] corage: spirit, heart.

317. Iff thou remembre when we were last together we hade comunicacion of a certayn manys lurnynge, on the which I was movede by thy great praysyng that thou gavest hym. I wenyde it hade be moche more than it is in very dede. but I trowe thou didest praise hym for great love, for love ever augmentith* many thynges.

318. These ij that be brethern of onn birthe be so lyke both in maners and connynge that I wote not whom I sholde juge better then other.

319. I most ryde within this ij or iij dais, yf I may gett me a hors, into my Cuntrey for many errandes that I have to done, but as they say they dye sore uponn the pestelence ther, wherfor I fere me to hye to fast thyderwarde tyll I her other tydynges.

320. I suppose that no weke in all my lyff I have benn more besy than I have ben this weke now passyde, for why ther was no day but I passide over the teamys[1] ij tymes at the lest, iiij tymes at the most, for to go by londe it was to diseasfull, wher the way was longer and also durty.

321. The roffe of an olde house hade almoste fall onn me yesterday. and onn of my felows hade not callede me oute in seasonn I hade not skapede alyve, for I was no sonner oute but it fell downe.

[1] teamys: Thames.

322. I saw never man have so sowre a looke and be so well favorede.

323. Go into the gardyn and gader sum floures to sett in our wyndowe.

324. Pluke upe thes weedes* by the rottes and make us a clenn gardyn.

325. As I walkede be the woode side I herde a thrushe synge merely and the blake osell and the nyghtyngall.

326. I have a kybe onn my right hele wherfor I cannot do onn my shoys, yete I were them like sleppers.

327. Touch me not, thou horson,* for and if thou do thou shalte repent it.

328. Whether away? have ye eny great hast? take a knave with youe or ye go, I pray youe, for alonn is withoute conforte, and rather then ye sholde go withoute eny mann I myselfe wyll waite upon youe.

329. — Whether gost thou?

— sumwhether, thou maist well wyte. but what is that to the?

— I wolde wyte.

— I wyll tell the when I cum agayn.

330. What hast thou to do with me? It is mery that thou sholdyst wyte whether I goo.

*331.** — Whether away?

— to the mylle.

— What to do, a godys name?

— lett[1] me not, for I bere hevy and have far to go. sest thou not what a sake of corne I bere in my neke for fawte of an horse? and yete I have ij myle to goo.

— Marye, thou hast quytt the well that thoue hast gotyn the suche a service wher thou most do the office both of beste and of mann!

— abyde a while here. I come agayne anone when my corne is grounde, for I moste hye me home in all the haste.

— Why, I praye youe?

— for we have not onn mussell of brede to ete at home, and ther be many mowthes.

— shall what brede[2] do for suche a knave as thou arte? wyll not peese and benys serve the? rotes of herbys is to goode for the. brede sholde serve for free menn.

— how, who is lorde of this house?

— mary, sir, I have the rule therof and care for all thynges that is done here while the lorde therof is away. may my service do youe eny pleasure?

— First of all, lett me in.

— It shal be done with a goode wyll.

— what mete hast thou that wolde gyve a mann a corrage to ete?

[1] lett: hinder.

[2] what brede: wheaten bread; *see note.*

— I have many kyndes of metes, as sprottes[1] tailys, herynge cobbys,[2] and salt elys skynns. ye shall chose what wyll please youe best.

— what, mokest thou me? I say, gete forth sum other mete, I avyse the, lest thou have a shrewde turne.

— wyll youe eny freshe water fyshe?

— yee, mary!

— forsoth, ye sholde have if eny were lefte, but ther is great crafte in the cachynge of them.

— what, mokest thou me agayne?

— mary, gode forbyde I sholde moke suche a worshipfull man as ye be.

*332.** — What ye sir! ye be welcomm home. how have ye faryde this many a day?

— Well, thankede be gode, and I am verey glade that ye fare well. I have myst my goode companyons a great while and was almost waxinge seke for longynge after them. but how doth oure goode Antoney? In feith, he is the gentylyst that ever I was acqueyntyde withall.

333. I wolde be glade to waite upon youe to gyve youe youre welcome to Towne.

334. What contrey man shall I call youe, I pray youe? I have sen youe oftentymes, but wher I cannot tell now. be not ye my contrey man? truly ye be. the more I loke

[1] sprottes: sprats. [2] cobbys: heads.

upon youe mesemeth ye be, or ellys I take my merke amysse.

335.* — I am avisede[1] to cast my shone away upon sum dongehyll that beggars may fynde them sone, excepte thei wyll serve my brother bycause his fete be lesse than myn. for olde shone sytt shrodely onn onys feet. I wolde thei were hole[2] in his bely, so gode me helpe, that first shapyde them, for onys thei be so narowe that I have moche care to gete them on, thei wrynge my tose cursedly.

— yete cast not away thyn olde by myne advyce tyll thou be sure of newe. thou maist hape to go barefote than, and that thou woldist be loth to do. Fare faire and softly with thiselfe and take it not so hote. be content to were suche gere as sitteth for your Estate. Thynke thou maist not go like a lorde for whye thou hast not wherwithall to bere it owte.

— Why doste thou rebuke me for that or cast it in my teth that coste the nought nor hast nothynge to do withall? I wyll were my gere as me liste while I am myn owne man and payeth therfore as another mann doth. tell me, who shall say me nay? I awe the noughte, nor comyth to the to borowe. I have enoughe of myn awne (yf every man hade his) to fynde me while I lyffe. And if my money hape to faile, I knowe the ways how to gete me more while my handes serve me as thei do.

— mary, sir, I lett the not. gete money as the pleasith, so thou cum nyghe none of myn. for and thou do, do it while I am away, that I knowe it never. for and I espye

[1] avisede: determined. [2] hole: whole.

the, thou shalt not go maide[1] away. yee, or stele it for a nede, and thou wilt, yf thou fynde eny ease therin, and yf youe be hangyde therto, lete hym care first for me that first shall repent.

— thou bestowest thi labour shrodely that labourest all day and takest no wages. It wolde greve me as evyll as to love and not to be lovede agayne.

336. — I am excellent of strenght. I marvell why the kynge commaundith not me to be sent for that I may bere his standerde.

— What sir, what do ye? methinkyth ye praise yourself.

337. [I.]* I cannot be in rest for this comberus[2] boye. therfor I wyll goo my way evyn streight.

T. Nay, tarey a litle while tyll it be ix at cloke and I wyll go with youe.

I. Why, it is past ix allredy, I trow, for the cloke stroke evyn now.

T. spekist thou in ernyst or in jape? I wolde it were as thoue saist.

338. I am aferyde to bide at home with the for I was forbyde thy company as though thou haddist ben the myschevyste felowe on lyve.

339. This jakenapys thrugh his popeholynes[3] thynkith to be more sett by than all us.

[1] maide: untouched (*inultus*). [2] comberus: troublesome.
[3] popeholynes: pretended piety.

340. Ther is never an unthryfte in this town but thou art aqueyntede with him.

341. Knewe ye not afore what maner a man, as yet, I am? be gode, ye shall or ye go, for I shall tech all such as thou art to beware how thei bakebyte[1] hereafter eny man.

342. I marvell greatly wherfor thou art angry with me. I take gode and mann to recorde that I was never cause to displease the.

343. Ye shall not play the churle with me the nexte tyme that I wayt on youe. for I se well nowe, yf a man do a goode turne he shall have a shrewde for it.

344. I am sory that I have done ever so moche for the when I fynde the so ungentyll agayne to me in my nedys.

345. I waxe wery of the, John, and wyll cum no more in thi felishipe while I have a day to lyve, withoute thoue take another waye. For thou art pert oute of measure, and thou kepe thyne olde guyse and takyst upon the a lordys rome whithersoever thou becomyste.

346. John, in every company that thou comyst in thou crakyste[2] moche of thy gyftes that thou hast gevyn to me,

[1] bakebyte: backbite, slander. [2] crakyste: braggest.

that a mann may be wery to here of it. I trow if thou lokeste well aboute the I have gevyn the as many and moo. but I lete that passe, for ther is nothynge that grevyth me but ofte rehersyng of it. for as the sayng of Therence* is, 'Ofte rehersynge of a thynge is but an upbraydynge of a mann that rememberith not who hath don for hym.'

347. Ther is nothynge that grevyth me mor then the daily umbraydynge[1] of thy gyftes to me. I hade lever never be in thy daunger[2] then thou shuldist contynue to umbrayde me thus.

348. Ther is no mann that I wolde desire to be more with than with the yf thou woldest leve thi great roilynge[3] and foule spekynge, for if thou knewst how evyll it becomyth the, I am sure thou woldest leve it. but as Cicero* saith, I cannot tell howe we may se a fawte soner in another mann than in oureselfe.

349. Methynke I ought to do for[4] my lech,[5] for when I was seke of the pestilence nothynge easyde me of my payn but hys mery conforte. I trowe no mann coulde do more attendance to another then he dyde to me.

350. Felowe, thoue art welcome home. thanke be to almygty gode thou were not vexede with no seknes

[1] umbraydynge, umbrayde: upbraiding, upbraid.
[2] daunger: debt.
[3] roilynge: vexatiousness (*procacitate*).
[4] do for: benefit; *see 133*.
[5] lech: physician.

sithen thou wentist into the contrey. but onn thynke[1] grevyth me sore, that I understode of onn of my goode frendes that thou thretist me hurte. but beware, I say beware, lest whils thoue goste abowt to do me hurte thou hurtiste thyselfe greatly.

351. Ther be many lordes that cannot pley the lorde, but I that am none can pley it rially.[2] It is pite that I am non in very dede. for while other men blouth the fyre,* I slepe styll be I never so ofte callede upon.

352. I hade nede to beware, Thomas, for thy sake upon whom I cum hereafter to fight, for oure strenghtes were fare unlyke, for thou Clowtiste me so aboute the hede and aboute the chekys with thy fiste that thou madist my hede bolne[3] and all my face almoste to be swolne. thou art not to be blamyde for I begane upon the myselff.

353. I was so angre yesterday with onn for his knappysh[4] wordes that I was so stoynede[5] that unneth[6] I coulde utter eny worde in english or in latyn. I went my way verey shamefast, but I promytt[7] hym and ever I mete hym hereafter he shall not scape my hondes qwyte.[8]

354. Yff it were as moche for my profytt as for thin that the best menn sholde rule the comynwele I wolde advyse

[1] thynke: thing.
[2] rially: royally.
[3] bolne: swollen; *see note*.
[4] knappysh: testy.
[5] stoynede: astonished.
[6] unneth: scarcely.
[7] promytt: promise.
[8] qwyte: without punishment (*impune*).

that in the election of officers such cheffly sholde be avansede, all other laide apart. but forasmoche as I have so orderyde my lyff, fro the begynnyng of my age, that it is harder for me then for the to lyve fawtles, it is not to be marveylyde yf I hade lever that suche bere a rule as I know be more like me then the.

A Variety of Observations

355. Rayn water that comyth from the house roffe, droppynge from tyle to tyle by the gutters and thorughe the ledyn pypys, men say is goode for scriveners crafte. therof thei make ynke.

356. Not only birdes that bere fethers ley Egges and sett them abrode[1] and hatche them, as the hen sitteth abrode and hatcheth chekyns, but also ther be other bestes, yf we beleve auctours,[2] as serpentes, that brynge forthe after the same maner. It is a mervelous thynge that of the hete of the dame the stream of bloode beynge within the Egge sholde growe to a thynge of lyffe, but it sholde not be marvelide of the crafty werke of nature.

357. It deliteth sum menn to lye in Fether beddys, sum in materasses, sum in floke[3] beddys, every man after his pleasur.

[1] abrode: (abrood), hatching. [2] auctours: authorities.
[3] floke: stuffed with wool.

358. Pore men lacke many thynges, the which when they have gote mete for ther dyner moste go strete by strete to seche brede and drynke.

359. Olde menn that may not well go onn ther fete muste have a staffe to bere upe ther feble lymmys with.

360. Many Childrenn were no shoys[1] tyll thei be xiij or xij yere olde at leste. Whose fete be longe contynuance of tyme be so harde that thoughe they go over thornes, brers, and sharpe stones yet thei fele no payne.

361. I have herde agyde men say oftyntymes that thei lyvede never a meriar lyffe than thei lyvede when thei wer childern, for though thei be at their liberte and have money enoughe when thei be at manys state or els* in age yete thei have many mo thynges to care for.

362. I kepe not, nowe that I am a man, the same condicions that I was wonte to whan I was a childe, and first and formyst I put myselfe in presse[2] no mor nother medle me with other mennys maters.

363. Ther is noo cryme nor fawte that is knowen but ther is a remedy for it in the lawe, how it shal be punyshide. for ever as eny new hurtes or myschevous wer donn, they

[1] shoys: shoes.

[2] in presse: forward.

made new lawes, and in their makynge they dide very wisely, for they never forbade nothynge that was unknowen, considerynge that, as the poet* saith, a mann is ever redy to do that that he is forbyde.

364. It is a pitefull case to here the deth of men other in pestilence or in eny other seknes, but how great a greff is it more to se a man drownde hymselfe, hange hymselfe, or slee hymselfe with eny yron. for in other dethys it is to be thought that a man hath sum repentance for his synnes or offences but in this maner of deth it is harde to conjecture thorughe whose mevyng[1] a man shulde chaunge lyffe for deth.

365. It is reason for every mann that goth forth onn pilgrimage to have absolucioun both of synne and of payne.*

366. The gloriouse martir saynt laurence, which made no stykkynge for to take upon hym to suffre or abyde the most cruell tormentes for godes sake, the wodnesse of the Tirant and thretnynge movede not hym, yee, and moreover, when his sides were brennyde with brynnynge plates of yern, when he enduryde other tormentes and at the last he was put onn the grydeyern as ye knowe, he, mery and lusty, thankede gode that thrugh his grace he coulde deserve so (or, in suche wyse) to enter the yates of hevyn.

367. The gostely fathers ought to pondre well howe great the synnes be of them that be shryven, and as thei

[1] mevyng: moving, impulse.

have deservede so to joyne[1] them fastynge, almesdede, or prayer, the which thynges put away synnes.

368. It is but a litell wynnynge[2] (nay, nay, not a whitt) wher men sell no derer than they bye but rather better Chepe. For a merchande that lyveth by his merchandyse but withoute great encrease[3] (or, great availe) he may not holde his owne, but he boroweth money and comyth so fere in dett that he is never hable to paye it.

*369.** — I came yesterday into a Chambre that was both clen and also propire, havynge nothynge that shulde discontent your ey. ther in the hangynge this was payntide: ther stode saynt Johan with his camellys skyne onn hym, and aboute hym on this side and that side wylde beestes and foulys of many and diverse fascion.

— what wer they? I besech youe, tell us.

— I shall. befor the sayntes feete ther lay a styll lion couchynge, be hym a myghty boore puttynge downe the starynge[4] of his bristelles, beside that an eliphant lenyng to a tree* turnyng upe his trumpe, forthright agaynst hym the wolfe and the bere lokynge onn the grownde. the unicorn and the antloppe helde ther erys afare of and dide in a maner herkyn. I spyede also the squerell commynge forth oute of an hole of an oke.

— ye have shewde us well the maner (or, kyndys) of beestes. now shewe us another while the kyndys (or, maner) of birdys.

[1] joyne: enjoin.
[2] wynnynge: profit.
[3] encrease, i.e. in price.
[4] starynge: standing on end, ruffling.

— verely and I shulde not lye, I know them not beside the pelicane and the popyngay. ther was on that sprede his wynges. I wote not whether it were an Egle for because a goode meany[1] of the shadow of the small bowys dyde hyde.

370. The conyngar a mann is, the more nede he hath to beware what eligance he useth to sum menn, for many tymes when thei cannot bolte[2] oute the trewe sentence[3] they interpretate to the worst that that thou writest of very lovyng mynde.

371. It is full harde to please all menn, for sum be so dangerous[4] that yf a mann do all that he cann he cannot please or content them.

372. The madnes of many men is so great that excepte thei were put in fere thorughe sharpnes of ponyshment ther sholde be nonn so grevous a myscheff that thei wolde forbere.

373. Many onn goth by the way as though thei hade not on peny in all the worlde, and yete thei be worth an C ł, and many onn takith upon them as thei wer lordes and yet the devyll may daunce in ther purse for eny crose* or quoyn is in it.*

[1] meany: many.
[2] bolte: sift, find out.
[3] sentence: meaning.
[4] dangerous: captious (*morosi*).

374. I saw yesterday in the fair many off myn acquentance rially apparelde, goynge with cheynes of golde, havynge by their brestes great nowchys[1] with golde, perelys, and pr[e]cious* stonys, yete they cam but of a low stoke, the which maner of people as it is comynly saide when they cum to honour or to worshipe be moste proudyst.

375. Ther be many menn in englande that be of such condicyon that no mann may do them a more greater pleasur then to praise their dedys in other menys presence, for that they desire and sett bye, and of the contrary wyse ther can nothynge displease and greve them more then to blame them openly off their dedys.

376. Yff all thynge hade fortunede after my mynde I hade ben this day at stirbrige faire* wher, as men say, a man may bye better chepe than enywher ellys.

377. Methynke that merchanttes gett their riches and their goodes with great jeopardy of their lyffes and namly they that be wont to use the see, for when ther be such stormys in the see as was trobelous thys nyght they scapyde hardly with their lyffys.

378. As we satt by the fyre yesternyght when the great wynde begane to arise we hade a comunicacioun[2] of them that wer in the see, of whome we hade great pite to

[1] nowchys: brooches, buckles.
[2] comunicacioun: talk.

remembre the fere and drede that thei were in, and how thei wer tossede and caste with the wawys. for they lightly other be caste undre the water or upon a rocke.

News

*379.** I understonde that the kynge hath commandyde ther shall no man go into flaunders to by or sell. whether he hath criede batell with them or not I cannot tell. Furthermore I here say he hath a garde of menn about hym, nother he gothe never oute but he is sett aboute with harnysede menn.* yf it be so, methynkith he doth wysely for it is no doubte a princes lyffe is suspiciouse to many menn and hatefull to unthriftes.

380. On of oure maisters servantes com home late yesternyght from walys, but what tydynges he hath brought I cannot tell, but I shall wytt when he and I have lesur to comyn together.

*381.** I was very sory for the pore husbondes in my contrey when I say[1] their carefulnes to make money of their stuffe for the kynges silver. the price of corne and shepe and of all bestes is abatyde in so moch that they sell moche thynges for litell Sylver.

[1] say: saw.

*382.** I thynke ther is no man alyve that can remembre that ever he se whete or pese other Corne or eny other vitaile that is brought to the market to be solde cheper than we se nowe, but it is lesse to be marvelyde yf a man take hede. for men have not so moch money as thei wer wont, and nowe be fayn every man that hath ought for to sell to put it owte.

*383.** All maner of white corne* as whete and barly was never solde better chepe than it is evyn now but yete it is to be feryde leste it wyll not so another yere. for in many cuntrays the barly lyeth drye in the grounde and never comyth upe, and all code ware,[1] as men say, be dissaytfull in their coddys.[2]

384. This fair wether after the troublenes of stormys and continuacioun of rayns makith every mann glade that loveth his owne welth or the comynewelth, for and the wether wer as stormye as it begann nor hade non other wise mesurede hymself it wolde have benn a great fere of darth of all maner corne, but I trust now this temperate wether shall dry upe the londe agayne that menn may sowe as well as they were wonte to do.

385. This day iij days dyede a certayn aldermann of londonn off a consumptioun, a mann in all his lyff right honorable, and such onn whom all menn gave price and pryke* withoute compariciouN.

[1] code ware: podded produce. [2] coddys: pods.

*386.** I wote not whether it be more wytt or boldnesse to sett upe skafoldys and to go upe to the tope of poulys[1] and take of the wethercoke from the bolle[2] that it is fastynede in, and also to brynge it downe, and after it is amendyde to go upe agayn and sett it in his olde place.

387. I herde say that ther were two theves put to deth yesterday for merdure. and yf I hade be war befor I wolde have bene ther. yet it was tolde me that ther cam a commaundment from the commyssarye* that no man payne of presonment shulde cum ther. yete I am sure ther were many.

[1] poulys: St. Paul's.

[2] bolle: ball, sphere.

NOTES TO THE TEXT

1. For the Latin of this piece, see p. 101.

forth dais: late in the day. Cf *O.E.D.;* s.v. 'forth', 4. b.

clothes: painted cloths used as hangings.

9. It is a worlde: it is a marvel (*opere precium est*).

dull and voide of connynge: learning (*segniorem ad litteras et discipline vacuum*).

onn: one, the same (*sine qua vitam mortemque iuxta estimamus*); cf. Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, ii. 8: 'Eorum ego vitam mortemque iuxta aestumo, quoniam de utraque siletur.'

15. MS. reads 'aprell light'.

17. goode townes: notable or important towns (*urbes*). Cf. the conventional usage 'good ship'.

20. kybblayns: chilblains (*O.E.D.*, 1547).

22. disch for a kynge: the earliest use cited by *O.E.D.* is in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* (IV. iii. 8).

24. frumenty: a broth made of meal (*ius frumentatum*).

42. MS. reads 'I that have'.

49. and: if. In this manuscript, both 'and' and 'and if' are often used for 'if'.

lurcher: one who forestalls others of a fair share of food.

51. formalite*: obseruanciam* (*O.E.D.* 1599).

52. For the Latin, see pp. 102–3.

on the hede: headlong, without consideration (*O.E.D.*, 1555).

lockyth: lucketh (the obsolete verb 'to luck' meaning 'to chance'. The Latin is *euenit.*) See no. *84.*

furthe them bett: manage to beat them. Cf. *O.E.D.* s.v. 'forth' (vb.).

[was sent]: MS. omits something to this effect.

54. the next faire: at Oxford, this would be St. Giles, early in September.

57. kyndest: here used in the modern acceptation (*propicii*).

59. more goode then mete or drynke: cf. Tilley, M842.

64. wardens: an old variety of baking pear (*volema*).

70. at sixe and sevyn: cf. Tilley, A208; *O.D.E.P.*

72. money maketh mariage: cf. Tilley, M1074; *O.D.E.P.*

74. what fettes, what knakkes: what graceful and ingenious contrivances (*quid leporis, quos sales*).

75. sophistre: logic, the third subject of the trivium.

78. new auctors: modern grammarians.

82. Begynnynge is more than halfe the worke: cf. Tilley, B254.

83. groundes of Elygansies: fundamentals of good style (*fundamenta eloquencie*).

87. englysh tongue: the rules of most sixteenth-century grammar schools forbade the boys to speak English, even on the playing fields.

88. letters: here used in the general sense of 'themes' (*literas*).

92. frendes: the sense here is 'kinsmen' (*parentes*).

93. fals: incorrectly transcribed (*deprauati*). The English has no equivalent for the words following 'deprauati essent': 'aut omnino quidam eorum non deperiisent.'

94. wynchester: the Wykehamist College of St. Mary founded to prepare scholars for New College.

95. hedynton: Headington, at the time the wood nearest Magdalen School.

100. gravandes: greyhounds. Cf. the forms 'grahounde' and 'grifhoune' (*O.E.D.*). Although the symbol used here is clearly a 'v' and not the usual 'u' it may be that the scribe intended 'grauandes' (*O.E.D.* 'grawhond').

101. I can make nothing of this strange story.

102. streightways: MS. reads 'every streightways on of them'.

106. Evidently a maying.

108. levyth all studyes: the word play is lost in English (*a studiis vacant*).

110. See Introduction, pp. xxvii–xxviii.

111. the castell: Oxford Castle. See *169*.

113. oute of the: MS. reads 'oute the of'.

114. The letter 'N', used to designate both speakers in the MS., is here omitted.

119. noble: a gold coin then valued at 10*s.*

120. [he]: MS. omits.

123. [their]: MS. reads 'his'.

127. [prasyde]: MS. reads 'sparyde' (*laus atque amor sunt adhibenda*).

139. The speakers seem to be Boy, Master, and Usher.

stubberus: stubborn (cf. 'stobur', *236*). *O.E.D.* does not list a form of the adjective without a final 'n' but does record the adverb 'stoberlie' (*c.* 1430).

140. [creanser]: MS. reads 'maister' but the Latin is *tutor domi.* See *104*, *166*, and *247*, and Introduction, p. xxii.

141. Who is speaking to whom? Perhaps the master is scolding the usher for excessive severity.

142. were sorry: MS. reads 'wer were sorry.'

146. corrageles: without spirit (*O.E.D.*, 1593).

153. ydylnes: dullness (*tarditatem*). *O.E.D.* does not record this sense.

156. malvornn hyllys: cf. 'All about Malvern Hill a man may live as long as he will' and 'As old as the hills' (Apperson, *English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*, 1929).

sende not the soner for me: do not call me home soon.

162. dispo[si]cion: MS. reads 'dispocion'.

169. on the new fascyon: jocular for 'with a beating'.

170. The rules of most schools forbade the keeping of pets. For Magdalen practice see R. S. Stanier, *Magdalen School* (Oxford, 1940), p. 52.

182. bristyll: hog's bristle, used as a needle.

185. maister: the context seems to call for 'creanser' as in *140* but the case is less clear. The Latin reads *preceptor.*

187. Taverne: the Latin removes the dark suspicion that the boy's visit to the tavern was extracurricular: 'taberna in qua cum magistro fuero.'

191. Cf. Tilley, G284.

192. Cicero: cf. *De Amicitia*, xix. 67.

withoute eny tyme it fortune to a mann: an awkward translation of the Latin: *nisi eiusmodi tempus incidat.*

195. nother mete nother drynke do me goode: cf. *59.*

202. than a peny in pursse: cf. Tilley, F687; *O.D.E.P.*

204. [we]: MS. omits.

207. forde: afford, manage. *O.E.D.* does not list this form of 'afford'.

220. Carfaxe: the Oxford crossroads.

221. This is not the wild exaggeration that it may seem to the modern reader. An Oxford statute (*c.* 1410) concerned with 'chamberdekenys' (scholars who lodged by themselves) describes just such delinquents. They spend their days sleeping, but at night they visit taverns and brothels and go about thieving and murdering. The University therefore orders that all scholars must reside in some college or hall, under pain of imprisonment and banishment, and that no townsman shall permit a scholar to dwell in his house without special permission (Anstey, *Munimenta Academica*, i. 320; Mallet, *History of the University of Oxford*, i. 334).

222. frendes: here used in the modern sense.

223. to many thynges: i.e. to rash actions, perhaps suicide.

tha[t]: MS. reads 'thas'.

[have]: MS. omits.

228. light of ther handys: light-fingered, either in the sense 'dextrous at pilfering' or in the sense 'pugnacious' (*scelesti adeo manuque prompti sunt*).

232. ape fro tailys: cf. Tilley, A268.

236. bewtynes: not in *O.E.D.*

238. plautes proposicion: cf. Plautus, *Amphitruo*, i. 651.

243. In the MS. this passage follows *369* without a break.

247. the which: the antecedent is 'creansers'.

250. the longer he lyveth the lesse he hath: cf. Tilley, L293 and the title of W. Wager's play, *The Longer Thou Livest the More Foole Thou Art* (1633).

255. 'spare speke, spare spede': cf. Tilley S709; *O.D.E.P.*

256. The wily fox is common, but I cannot find the 'olde proverbe'. Nor do I recognize the fable referred to.

257. 'an hasty man lakkith never wo': cf. Tilley, M159; *O.D.E.P.*

259. This passage appears twice in the MS., at fol. 28 and fol. 55. The latter version is transcribed here. The former differs in its omission of the words 'not withoute a cause', reads 'methynkith' for 'mesemyth', and varies insignificantly in spelling.

263. The proverb 'service is none heritage' (Tilley, S253) means that one cannot rely upon the hire paid by an employer as one can upon one's own possessions. Cf. Thomas More's treatment of the problem in *Utopia*, Book I.

268. proctorshipe: the office of the University proctor. The proctor serves for one year.

273. the which: the antecedent is 'mountans'.

The story of Hannibal's use of vinegar to traverse the Alps is told in Livy, xxi. 37. The chemistry of the method remains a matter of scholarly dispute. Our author's brimstone does not derive from Livy.

277. other: utter (*quam ciuibus cum hostibus submersione*). *O.E.D.* does not record this form.

280. paris: MS. reads 'parish' (*parisii*).

286. comyn: consult (*O.E.D.*, s.v. 'common' [vb.]).

301. woldist come: MS. reads 'woldist not come'.

302. aske and have: cf. Tilley, A343.

303. [that]: MS. reads 'the'.

307. prety and colde: the Latin (*frigidiuscule*) suggests that 'prety' is used in the adverbial sense still current of 'somewhat' or 'rather'. Cf. *O.E.D.* s.v. 'pretty' (a) 5 c. for the usage 'pretty and'.

fenell seede: a spice used in drinks. Cf. *Piers Plowman*, A, v. 155–6:

> I haue peper and piane, and a pound of garlek,
> A ferthing-worth of fenel-seed, for this fastyng dayes.

308. gentlemann: *puerum ingenuum.*

317. ever augmentith: MS. reads 'ever augmentith ever'.

324. weedes: *inutiles herbas.*

327. horson: *sceleste.*

331. In the MS. both persons of the dialogue are labelled 'N' and the letter is prefixed to each of the speeches. For the Latin of this piece, see p. 103.

what brede: wheaten bread (*O.E.D.* does not record this form).

332. The MS. labels both speakers 'N'.

335. The MS. labels both speakers 'N'.

337. [I]: omitted in the English version but present in the Latin.

346. Therence: *Andria,* l. 44.

348. Cicero: *De Officiis,* i. 146.

351. blouth the fyre: usually has the sense 'stir up strife'. Apparently the usage here is without pejorative intention, 'stir things up'.

352. bolne: swollen. The Latin (*totum caput tuber*) derives from Terence, *Adelphi,* l. 245.

361. or els: MS. reads 'or in els'.

363. the poet: Ovid, *Amores,* iii. 4, 17.

365. of payne: *a culpa quam a pena.*

369. In the MS. this passage is followed without break by 243.

lenyng to a tree: elephants were reputed to relax in this fashion.

373. devyll may daunce: proverbial. Cf. Tilley, D233.

crose: the coin marked with a cross, a small coin.

374. pr[e]cious: MS. omits 'e'.

376. stirbrige faire: Stourbridge Fair, near Cambridge, one of the greatest of English fairs, held annually for three weeks beginning 18 September.

379. The embargo on trade with Flanders to which this passage refers was imposed in September 1493 and lifted in February 1496 (Wilhelm Busch, *England under the Tudors* [1895], pp. 88, 148). War was not declared.

harnysede menn: the Yeomen of the Guard, instituted by Henry VII. The Guard was formed at the beginning of the reign, in 1485; perhaps it was increased in size during the Perkin Warbeck troubles which brought about the embargo.

381. This and the two following passages speak of an unprecedented drop in the price of farm produce. According to J. E. Thorold Rogers, *A History of Agriculture and Prices in England* (Oxford, 1882), vol. iii, the price of wheat was lower in 1495–6 and in 1499–1500 than it had been

for many years. In 1509–10 prices dropped lower still, but this seems too late for our manuscript. *The Great Chronicle of London* (ed. A. H. Thomas and I. D. Thornley, London, 1938), which records only exceptional price changes, remarks on the low price of wheat (four shillings a quarter) in the mayoral years 1494–5 (p. 254) and 1499–1500 (p. 290).

382. See the note on *381*.

383. See the note on *381*.

white corne: grain, that is, a crop that 'whitens' in ripening.

385. price and pryke: the praise of excellence. *O.E.D.*, s.v. prick.

386. The reference is to an incident thought worthy of recording in the *Great Chronicle* (p. 286). Shortly after 6 December 1498 'the wedyr-cok of paulys takyn doun & agayn sett upp by a Carpenter of london callid Godffrey —— but it was the latter ende of maii or he hadd all ffynyshid his besynes abowth the same'.

387. commyssarye: the University chancellor's deputy (an obsolete Oxford acceptation).

APPENDIX I

The Latin Version of Passages 1, 52, and 331

Passage No. 1

Mundus ipse deterioresc̃it in dies, omniaque sunt ordine mutato inuersa, quicquid enim paruo mihi post trimatum ad decennium quantisper sub tutela parentum fui (nunc vero annum ago duodecimum) voluptati fuerat, tandem exiit in tormenta et supplicium. In illo namque tempore assidue in vultum diei in strato cubabam quotidie somno indulgens et segnicie. phebus immisit radios ad fenestras lucerne loco splendorem ministrans. O quante mihi voluptati erat omni diluculo orto sole oblectare me in lintheis tectum, trabes cubiculi et tigna contemplari, item tapeta quibus conclaue ornabatur intueri. Nemo sane mentis, se auctore confisus, a somno citari [*for* citare] ausit dormire volentem. mea sponte rogatus surgebam, abeunteque [*for* abeuntique] ultro quiescendi libidine expergefactus, accersiui quos volebam qui impromptu mihi indumenta ponerent. Inuocanti quoque mihi quotiens libuit ad grabati spondam, oblatum erat iantaculum [*for* ientaculum]. ita prius nonnumquam pastus quam amictus eram. Item aliis voluptatibus potitus eram pluribus quarum alie oblivioni tradite sunt, alias memoria teneo. Sed non sum vacuus ad memorandum.

Sed iam ordo rerum alia rota vertitur. ut quando hora diei quinta beneficio lune uso literis incumbendum est, relictis somno et segnicie. Si ludi magister forsan excitauerit fascem virgarum secum pro lucerna affert. Tandem supersedeo voluptatibus quibus totus olim indulgebam. hic nihil offertur nisi mine cum verberibus. Iantacula [*for* Ientacula] quondam ad iussum illata non reditura unquam exulatum abiere. plura meis de infortuniis dicerem sed quamuis sim vacuus ad narrandum, narrandi tamen voluntatem amisi. eorum enim commemoracio animum reddit tristiorem.

Omnis ego causas quero aliquando viuendi arbitratu meo, quum mihi liceat pro libidine vel a strato surgere vel [me] dormitum conferre isto vapulandi metu liberatu[m].

Passage No. 52

— Ditissimi cuiusque filii passim in euo puerili corrumpuntur hiis diebus, idque domi apud parentes, quod plane miserandum est. sed quibus pereunt modis (sit verbis fides si libet) non possum nisi lacrimans exprimere.

— Iam veritatis es transgressus limites. verius dixisse plerosque oportuit. haud enim animi pendio [*for* pendeo] quin non nullos cum urbanitate tum scienciis perquam probatissimos nouerim, quos si locarem inter primos minime videor iniurius esse. At quid me malum impulit ut orationi tue mea verba insererem? liquide appareo ab humanitate esse alienus, diligentius quoque pastum atque doctum dixeris. perge obsecro dicere. verba forsan alicui tua continget in frugem verti.

— Matres oportet apud se retinere qui cum pro puppis nugentur perinde quasi ad iocum et nugas nascerentur liberi. eos animant et verbis et rebus quo licenter omnia factitent. ita lasciuiis et licencia effeminati fede precipites eunt. item si contigerit matres pollices [*for* pellices] aut patres compellare cuculos (uti interdum euenit) arrident et pro faceciis capiunt, non extra genus esse arbitrantes licencia pueritiam liberos agere. Insaniam esse ducunt ad scolas trudere, satis id dignum censentes quicquam domi dedicerint [*a pun on* didicerint?]. Non paciuntur penas dare, non si omnia lucrat, nam si flere viderint radicitus esse necatos opinantur. faciam vobis exemplar de quodam propinquo meo qui hic in vicino apud domum propriam primis incumbit elimentis. is ut domum redit plorans (postquam a cute pulices preceptor abegerit) actutum mater nates spectat visura plage si appareant. Ast si viderit extare vibices in fletum et luctum tota soluitur ut que foret mente capta. tum seueritatem magistrorum queritur malle se ingemens sepultum videre quam eo more tractari filium. hec et ad hunc

modum infinita verba faciunt. interdum quoque prolis causa turba oritur inter maritum suam et coniugem, quin que ille mandat hecque inhibet. ita procedente tempore quum ad etatem maturam peruenerint euadunt ad omnia scelera perpetranda paruifacientes flagitium committere fedissimum. Et ad postremum per meritum aliquot suspendio moriuntur, nonnulli decollantur, alius alia via interit, ad quem exitum ducti imprecantur parentibus et aliis qui in pueritia eorum regimen habuere.

Passage No. 331

— Quo te recipis?

— molendinum peto.

— cuius rei si deo placet agende gratia?

— ne insis impedimento ut qui grauiter onoratus sum, etiam longa via restat. non vides quam capacem cum frumento saccum pre defectu iumenti in ceruice baiulo, et adhuc intersunt hinc ad molam duo milia?

— egisti vero strenue qui tale consecutus es seruicium in quo et hominum et iumentorum partes sunt agende.

— morare paulisper. istic mox frumento molito reuertar, nam posita omni mora, propere domum rediundum [*for* redeundum] est.

— qui cedo?

— non enim est buccella panis qua vescamur domi et illic ora non sunt numero pauca.

— quid opus est, pane qui detur istiusmodi verberonibus qualis tu es? nonne fabas et pisas pro deliciis haberes? herbarum radices sunt edulia; panis autem liberorum esset.

— Quis istius dominatur domus?

— ego vero presum huic domui et curo omnia que hic aguntur absente domino. potestne mea tibi opera usui esse?

— primum admitte me intro.

— fiet ac libenter.

— quid obsonii habes quod hominem ad esum sui prouoces?

— habeo multa ciborum genera: puta sparulorum caudas, reliquias allicium et capitella, salsarum pelliculas anguillarum. quod cordi erit maxime eliges.

— quid me ludibrio habes? quin aliud cibi exime ne feras infortunium.

— visne pisces fluuiatiles?

— volo.

— profecto haberes si superessent, sed sedula arte opus est ut prehendantur.

— rursum derides.

— absit ut ego talem derideam.

APPENDIX II

Order of Passages in the Manuscript

The reader can reconstruct the order in which the passages appear in the manuscript by observing the following sequence:

fol. 9: 241, 14, 175, 95, 89, 336, 235, 181, 165.
fol. 10: 299, 257, 261, 337, 332, 237, 96.
fol. 11: 94, 183, 265, 117, 188, 74, 40, 115.
fol. 12: 133, 349, 61, 63, 157, 127, 31, 64, 101.
fol. 13: 103, 27, 353, 245, 39, 109, 347, 169, 306, 140.
fol. 14: 107, 161, 25, 280, 315, 176, 7, 170, 149, 90.
fol. 15: 75, 166, 219, 111, 236, 377, 78.
fol. 16: 231, 374, 230, 264, 269, 222.
fol. 17: 160, 113, 168, 220, 116, 48, 8, 163, 23.
fol. 18: 21, 76, 172, 98, 35, 205, 352, 224, 387.
fol. 19: 141, 143, 174, 54, 319, 218, 112, 316.
fol. 20: 72, 55, 60, 246, 303, 295, 148, 134.
fol. 21: 69, 375, 87, 50, 37, 9.
fol. 22: 128, 77, 189, 225, 206, 194, 195, 192.
fol. 23: 159, 93, 266, 283, 59, 178.
fol. 24: 308, 262, 146, 385, 167, 152, 207, 288, 369, 243.
fol. 25: 239, 270, 363, 196, 384.
fol. 26: 275, 267, 145, 70, 32, 273.
fol. 27: 383, 212, 208, 272, 100, 79.
fol. 28: 309, 197, 19, 311, 259, 142, 102.
fol. 29: 221, 121, 130, 293, 350, 287, 13.
fol. 30: 291, 17, 227, 226, 300, 282.
fol. 31: 223, 285, 310, 2, 247.
fol. 32: 286, 209, 289, 348, 210, 30.
fol. 33: 368, 16, 346, 211, 364, 198.

fol. 34: 82, 147, 382, 213, 305, 290.
fol. 35: 187, 104, 108, 199, 296, 217.
fol. 36: 214, 258, 317, 297, 301, 83.
fol. 37: 298, 81, 294, 304, 268, 200.
fol. 38: 119, 71, 216, 123, 124.
fol. 39: 126, 378, 144, 379, 153, 244.
fol. 40: 91, 132, 367, 58, 360, 67, 20, 62.
fol. 41: 321, 38, 68, 162, 233, 277, 271.
fol. 42: 276, 274, 215, 356.
fol. 43: 361, 381, 120, 279, 302, 284.
fol. 44: 10, 129, 36, 366.
fol. 45: 238, 18, 331.*
fol. 46: 345, 1.*
fol. 47: 49, 335.
fol. 48: 139, 52.*
fol. 49: 52 continued.
fol. 50: 114, 263.
fol. 51: 105, 84, 56, 357, 372, 351, 278, 53, 386.
fol. 52: 47, 320, 164, 355, 42, 85, 248, 182, 110.
fol. 53: 155, 354, 362, 201, 202, 318, 6, 204, 180, 359.
fol. 54: 358, 254, 73, 228, 334, 373, 307, 240, 15, 26.
fol. 55: 259, 156, 328, 43, 344, 171, 185, 92, 370, 154, 256.
fol. 56: 150, 97, 365, 232, 22, 190, 46, 118, 242, 158, 329, 137.
fol. 57: 65, 44, 135, 151, 376, 186, 24, 260, 380, 3, 41, 33, 326, 330.
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*For Latin version see Appendix I.

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GREAT BRITAIN
AT THE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
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PRINTER
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